

THE PILGRIM

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NO. 1

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

What shall I ask for the coming year?

What shall my watchword be?

What would'st Thou do for me, dear Lord?

What can I do for Thee?

Lord, I would ask for a year of love,

That I may love Thee best;

Give me the love that faileth not,

Beneath the harvest test.

Lord, I would ask for a year of prayer,

Teach me to walk with Thee;

Breathe in my heart Thy Spirit's breath;

Pray Thou Thy prayer in me.

Lord, I would ask for the dying world;

Stretch forth Thy mighty hand;

Thy truth proclaim, Thy power display,

In this and every land!

—Selected

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THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD; AND THE FIRMAMENT SHEWETH HIS HANDIWORK--Psalms 19:1

Another year and another decade have passed, and we are reminded again of the swiftness of time. Time is so important to us, and yet it seems to be only a brief interlude in the eternity as God sees it. Time for us is measured by the rotation and the movement of our earth in relation to the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies. Away from the earth and its shadow, time must have a different gauge or means of measurement.

David in Psalms 8 writes, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him . . . ?" For centuries men have peered into the universe and speculated and wondered what it could all mean. Only in recent years with the inventions of the telescopes, photography, and the study and analysis of light rays have men realized the vastness of this creation of God. Scientists have discovered ways of measuring with some accuracy the distances and sizes and even approximate weights or masses of these great heavenly bodies, compared to which our earth is only a speck.

Halley's Bible Handbook reports: "Astronomers estimate that the Milky Way, the galaxy to which our earth and solar system belong, contains over 30,000,000,000 suns, many of them immensely larger than our sun, which is a million and a half times larger than the earth. The Milky Way is shaped like a thin watch, its diameter from rim to rim being 200,000 light-years: a light-year is the distance that light travels in a year at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. And there are, at least, 100,000 galaxies like the Milky Way, some of them millions of light-years apart. And all this may be only a tiny speck in what is beyond in the infinite, endless stretch of space."

Orbits and rotations are common in God's universe. One star out of three is actually double or multiple with the stars rotating around each other in perfect balance. The stars in the Milky Way also are in a giant rotation with the sun moving in this rotation at about 175 miles per second. And even at this tremendous speed, it would take the sun 200 million years to complete this circle. Besides this, some scientists believe there is an overall "expanding" motion in the universe with the galaxies moving out away from each other at terrific speeds.

We mention these great figures and movements to show the vastness of God's creation. These are man's figures and there could be many errors. But God's creation is wonderful and truly "the nations of the earth are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." (Isaiah 40:15) God must take pleasure in the beauty and order of these heavenly bodies and in their obedience to His laws.

Looking into the infinite detail of the tiniest part of the creation of God, scientists tell us something of the "size" of an atom: "A small toy balloon filled with hydrogen contains 100 million million billion hydrogen atoms." In another example, "If an atom were as big as the head of a pin, all the atoms in a grain of sand would make a cube one mile high, one mile wide, and one mile long." (Quotes from "World Book" Encyclopedia.)

These things are too wonderful for us. But there are even greater mysteries in things that have life, how God creates bodies and plants that grow and reproduce. And then when we go to the realm of the Spirit, we find powers and mysteries far greater than the physical. A recent hymn says:

It took a miracle to put the stars in place;

It took a miracle to hang the world in space.

But when He saved my soul,

Cleansed and made me whole,

It took a miracle of love and grace.

There is a place where God dwells, whether in the universe or beyond it, we cannot tell. But wherever it

is, it does not take years for God to travel the distance. (Jesus came down from God. Angels are heavenly messengers sent from God to earth.) There is also a place that Jesus went to prepare for us. And then there is the place of torment which Jesus describes and the place of eternal judgment. Certainly the terms "outer darkness", "bottomless pit" and "lake of fire" could apply to places in the universe as the scientists describe it.

While we cannot explain the wonderful works of God, we can be sure of some things. Jesus says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21:33) When He says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," we can be sure it will be this way.

So as the world whirls on toward judgment, and as its orbit is completed once again and a new decade begins, let us consider the eternal truths of God. Where will we spend eternity? Will this year, 1970, find us closer to the perfect will of God for us? Someday Jesus will return again. Jesus is the one about whom John wrote: "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." He has the secrets of the universe just as He knows our individual needs. He knows what it takes to hang the stars in space, and He knows what it takes to save our souls.

--L.C.

CUR AIM IN LIFE

Christ in His coming to earth has brought meaning to life. He has told us that we come from God and again go to God, and that God cares for each of us and that every life has a divine purpose.

At the changing of the years we reflect on the past and hope for the future. The days are going by one by one. The years are slipping away and one of these years shall find us before the Lord to give an account of our stewardship.

Christ interprets life for us, shows us what it is and what it may become. At the end He was able to say, "Father, I have glorified Thee on the earth. I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do"--John 17:4. He was only thirty-three, but He had accomplished His life's work. It seems that sometimes life is measured by quality rather than by length. His work was to show us the Father. He glorified God by exemplifying God's love, His forgiveness and His reconciliation.

In His work we must also see our work. We are here to glorify God--". . . do all things to the glory of God"--1 Corinthians 10:31. To glorify God is to manifest Him before others. With God there are no "extras," all are born with His permission and as many as are called and chosen are also assignees. It is therefore every Christian's obligation to glorify God and do the work given to him.

Life is not a game, yet it has a goal. As in a game, how can one play without knowing where the goal is? How can man live successfully without knowing what life is really for? Man's striving must be to glorify God. God has a plan for everyone. It often is that self-will that keeps us from knowing it and doing it. We cannot find it until we surrender everything to Him and be still before Him that He can give us guidance. Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." We may be very busy but that is not the point--are we doing the work God has given us to do?

Paul says, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." To eat and drink to the glory of God would be to receive it with thanksgiving, acknowledging to God and men that it is He who provides for us, giving rain and sunshine and fruitful seasons, as well as knowledge and physical ability. We manifest Him by our faith and trust, by using our physical strength for His work. In America so many people do not glorify God with their substance. The communist world is struggling with agricultural projects that leaves many people hungry and destitute of homes and lands. They do not glorify God in the

things they possess. They trust in their hand to bring them their needs. There seems to be so little that they glorify God in, making their lives without meaning.

In our recreative periods, such as time out for rest and vacationing the Christian needs to remember that this too is to be to the glory of God. With this in mind the place of vacationing must be well chosen, and God needs to be manifested in our lives in our conduct, conversation, as well as in eating and drinking. Men about us must be reminded by our word or deed that there is a God who cares and Who is to be feared. His goodness to all men needs to be told, and the joys of having Him in our lives must be manifested.

In our temporal life, buying, selling and operations, God needs to be glorified. This will demand temperance, and a Christ-like spirit in all our dealings. Too many people are concerned only as their dealings and operations touch honesty and within the law. These are necessary points, but in itself will not glorify God. Men will give credit to ones self on such points, but to manifest God to our fellowmen demands more. The give-and-take, the live-and-let-live principles are good but it is still human, and in order to glorify God one must go beyond that and become Godly.

Jesus came to finish the work the Father had assigned to Him. That part which pertained to His earth life He was able to accomplish in three years. His work, however, continues from the right hand of God.

We are all stewards, each has a particular place to fill, a work to do. Sometimes God commissions directly, as with Paul, and other times we receive our work schedule through the church, or church board. From whatever source it comes or wherever it places us, we should be of a mind to work faithfully and finish the work assigned to us, and do it to the glory of God--God working through us.

The days ahead are to find each of us busy as unto the Lord, that He is uplifted in our whole life. We may not accomplish all we plan, but the final test of life

will not be what we planned, but whether we have done what God sent us into the world to do—"I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."

—From the "Messenger of Truth"

GOING ON TO PERFECTION

Our aim as Christians is to go on to perfection. Perfection is the standard of Christianity. There is no such thing as standing still in Christianity. We go either heavenward or worldward by observing the Bible ordinances, God's means of grace, the stepping stones to greater spirituality.

A Christian must work. We learn in Christ's gospel that He is the "Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Jesus is our highest Ideal. Picture Him standing at the top of a mountain. Because of His exalted position He offers us just the thing we need. It is eternal salvation.

We are either at the foot of the mountain or somewhere on the mountain road, ascending or descending. We reach the top only by following Christ, who has climbed that way and knows the road. He is acquainted with its dangers and struggles, as well as its blessings.

Paul made an appeal for us to go on and reach the top. We should go on to perfection. We should not always be laying a foundation but building on the foundation. "For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11)

Jesus Christ is our ideal. And since He is perfect, if we are His true followers, we must strive for perfection. We cannot get to the top of the mountain unless we get on the right and proper way. We find in Christ's gospel recorded by John the words of Jesus, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." We also find

in the same gospel these words, "I am the door." Then His principles are fundamental; they are the foundation of all Christian building.

If we obey self we cannot serve God because we cannot serve two masters. We must separate ourselves from the worldly master and cleave to Christ alone. We must follow Christ completely if we wish to succeed on this journey toward perfection. We must at all times be in close communication with Jesus. We need to pray daily for His guidance. He has left us the guide, the precious word of God, to follow. Let us study it daily so we can stay on that close and narrow way.

All the Bible ordinances are simply stepping stones on this narrow way. Let us be very careful that we do not confuse the ordinances Christ has instituted with those made by man. We must daily follow Christ, as this journey is a daily task. We must not slumber on the way but have our lamps burning bright, for the bridegroom may come at any time. Jesus tells us, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my father only." (Matthew 24:36) We as His true followers should always be busy in the vineyard of the Lord, speaking to lost souls and doing all we can to help others on the way of Life. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord cometh shall find so doing."

---E. M. Alltus

Modesto, California

HE HAD A HEAVENLY MANSION

The cold wind of a December night bit at his face as he pulled his coat more tightly about him. Hendrik Bemkens and his wife, Anna, were stumbling along a dark alley in an unfamiliar section of Utrecht. Hendrik was worried that someone from the night watch might still be prowling around. They kept a more careful guard in the rich man's part of the city than in his own.

Hendrik had been baptized just that spring at a meeting on Homburger Street in the house of a penniless

button maker. Now he and his wife were on their way to a meeting at the stately patrician mansion of Cornelis van Voordt, a mansion so important that it even had a name--the "Cranesteyn." He whispered the name over several times to his wife. It seemed quite impressive to the simple tailor.

It was four o'clock in the morning. They had been told to come at that time. They must stay inside the big house the entire day. They would be able to leave not before nightfall when their departure would be unnoticed. In this way no one would know that an unusual group of people had gathered at the "Cranesteyn" that day.

The door in the garden wall was unfastened, as Hendrik had been told. Through Van Voordt's garden, up some steps they felt their way. Although there was not the faintest gleam of light, they tapped quietly at a door. A servant girl with a candle opened it. The inside of the door window was hung with a heavy cloth.

Hendrik entered the ballroom, where the meeting was to be held, with his hat in his hands. The candles in the crystal chandelier spread a sparkling light over the rich, gilt furnishings of the room. The windows were also hung with several layers of heavy black cloth. Old Cornelis van Voordt, who was very friendly toward the brethren but not one of the church, himself offered Hendrik a little songbook. Hendrik refused, saying he could not read.

Soon the meeting began. The man in charge was dressed in black. He was of average height with a gray beard and white hair. He was perhaps the most effective bishop the brethren had left since Memmo Simons had died in January of that year and Joost Varbeeck, who had baptized Hendrik, had been executed in June. Hendrik listened carefully to the bishop's preaching.

At this nocturnal meeting the wife of Cornelis van Voordt and two of his sons were baptized along with Beatris, their servant girl. Then communion was served to about twenty members of the church, rich and poor alike. It was Hendrik's second communion service.

After the service Hendrik enjoyed the hours in the big house, while they waited for nightfall and their departure from the meeting. He talked with the other brethren about the Scriptures and especially tried to hear everything the bishop said. Although Hendrik could not read, his keen interest in the Word of God caused him to learn quickly. He could even tell others in which chapter they would find this or that statement—in a book which he himself could not read!

In the spring of the following year, 1562, Hendrik Eemkens and his wife were attending another meeting at van Voordt's mansion when the authorities broke in. Some of the worshippers escaped, but not Hendrik and his wife. A few of the persons captured avoided the death sentence by recanting. Cornelis van Voordt (although he was not a brother in the church) and his wife were banished, and their riches were confiscated.

Hendrik Eemkens, the poor tailor, had nothing much which could be taken from him but his life. He was sentenced to die on June 10, 1562, at Utrecht.

At his execution when Hendrik knelt on the scaffold to pray, the savage executioner jerked him up by his shirt so that he could not finish. Hendrik then had to stand on a little bench, and yet all the while he kept calling out and admonishing the assembled crowd to repent and turn to God. The executioner fastened him to the stake with a chain and hung a bag of gun powder around his neck.

Since Hendrik spoke so boldly, the brutal man passed a rope around his neck and with several twists hushed his words. Pulling the bench from beneath Hendrik's feet, he thrust a fork with a bundle of straw into a little pot of fire on the scaffold. When the straw was burning, he held it up to the bag of gunpowder hanging around Hendrik's neck. It ignited with a flash, and soon Hendrik Eemken's earthly sufferings were over.

---By James W. Lowry
In "The Pearl of Great
Price"

CUT OF THIS LIFE

Out of this life I shall never take
Things of silver and gold I make.
All that I cherish and hoard away
After I leave, on this earth must stay.

Tho' I have toiled for a painting rare
To hang on the wall, I must leave it there.
Though I call it mine, and boast its worth
I must give it up when I leave this earth.

All that I gather and all that I keep
I must leave behind when I fall asleep.
And I often wonder what I shall own
In that other life, when I pass alone.

What shall they find, and what shall they see,
In the soul that answers the call for me?
Shall the Great Judge learn when my task is
through
That my spirit has gained some riches, too?

Or shall at last, it be mine to find
That all I'd worked for I'd left behind?

--Author unknown
Selected by Mary Lavy

BIRTHS

SHIRK - A daughter, Rebecca Ann, born to Glen and Lois Shirk on December 31, 1969, at Stockton, California.

MARTIN - A daughter, born to Kenneth and Lois Martin on January 10, 1970, at Nappanee, Indiana.

FIFTEEN MINUTES IN BIBLE LANDS

ON THE ROAD TO JERICHO

The way that goes "down from Jerusalem to Jericho" is full of suggestions and abounds with historical associations. It is the track by which Joshua and the Jews came up into the highland moors of the Promised Land. After David had made Jerusalem the center of national life and worship, the road ran much as now. This road has forever been immortalized by our Lord as the scene of the most vivid and touching of parables--the "Parable of the Good Samaritan."

Gazing from the heights of Olivet toward the east, we see our way spread before us as if we are looking upon a map. The road goes down, down, winding left, winding right. Hairpin bend follows hairpin bend, down through the Wilderness of Judea. We can see the white road twisting and turning into a sterile wilderness of parched rock, dropping ever downward into bleakness and solitude. Even the stones are wasted by age, relieved nowhere by a tree, or enhanced by a single blade of grass. Wild beasts would starve in it! The most industrious bird could not collect in its length and breadth enough soft material to make a nest. It exhausts the language of description.

Winding up and around the base of the Mount of Olives we soon reach Bethany and are in the open country. We then come to an eminence from which we have the last view of the Holy City, with its lofty Dome of the Rock, minarets, towers, and churches.

The road now begins to descend and as we look back, Jerusalem disappears. Here the road continues through ravines and across hillsides. We do not see this; we only see the rough broken hills, the great dip of the Jordan Valley--and beyond this the magnificent Mountains of Moab. The descent is now steep. We are indeed going "down . . . to Jericho," but not to fall "among thieves"! Even if its existence had never been recorded in past ages, even if it had no sacred connection and hallowed

memories, it would take its place among the famous mountain passes of the world. Some of the hills are domed or cone-shaped, like young volcanoes, and others are queerly twisted, tortured, and deformed, as if chewed up by fire like the clinkers that come out of a furnace.

Continuing our journey through land that during the rainy season is covered with herbage and wild flowers, but which during a dry season is bare, the road winds among savage, brown hills--not a tree, not a sprig of green grass to relieve the desolate landscape. The sparse desert vegetation, spiny shrubs and bushes, can hardly be distinguished against the whitish gray background.

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves." Certainly the road still retains the wild aspect of a scene of rapine and murder. Tourists have mistakenly pictured this road as running through dark woods that afford hiding places for robbers. Nevertheless, the hiding places are there in the bushes and caves in the rock between which the highway runs. It is never straight for very long. How admirably calculated for "robbers"!

Hundreds of robbers might lurk unseen in the caves and dens on the broken, rugged slopes. At hundreds of points along the road are stretches lying between two acute corners and backed by towering cliffs and projecting boulders, where a few armed men can hold up anything that comes along. The robbery once committed, nothing could be easier than an escape into the barren trackless wilderness, where hundreds of caves furnish secure hiding places, and where a searching party might wander for months without success! We are, however, in no danger at present, but the evil reputation of the neighborhood adds verisimilitude to the "Parable of the Good Samaritan."

After twenty minutes' drive from Jerusalem we suddenly come upon an agreeable surprise--a wayside inn--the "Inn of the Good Samaritan" amidst scenes still more desolate and extensive. It is said there has

always been an inn on this spot. In fact, it is the only building on the road! It is refreshing to think that this spot must also have been a resting place for our Saviour and His disciples in their journeyings to and from the Jordan Valley. I should think it must have been a very welcome place to tired pedestrians and lonely riders.

Before the first World War a brisk business was done here. But then there were only ten cars in all Palestine; whereas today there are over ten thousand, and the numbers are increasing rapidly! There is now little need for a stopping place.

The building is the usual primitive inn which long ago provided safety for men and beasts during the night. At present it is being used as a check-post by the Jordan authorities.

But why is it called the "Inn of the Good Samaritan"? There is no doubt that this is the inn to which our Lord refers in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, for as the Saviour's discourses and teachings were largely based on incidents and scenes around Him, it is a story that had its foundation in fact. Here the poor man was entertained for "two cents." There is seldom a caretaker at caravansaries in desolate places in the East, but some offer this advantage as did the one in the parable, which had a host who could even be trusted with the care of the sick. A wizened donkey stands at the back door munching hay. It looked almost old enough to have been the beast upon which the wounded man was brought to this inn!

The Good Samaritan, mounting his steed, passes out of our hearing, and out of our sight. Not quite out of our hearing, however, for heaven has caught his gentle, loving words, and hidden them within this parable, that all coming times may listen to their music; nor out of our sight either, for his "picture" was caught in the sunlight of the Master's speech. As we turn over the pages of inspiration there is no picture more beautiful than that of the nameless Samaritan, whom all the world calls "the good," the man who knew so much better than his age what humanity and mercy meant.

The parable is in itself so interesting and so easy to be understood that it is to be hoped that it is well known to every grown person and child among us. Perhaps there is no more sure and infallible sign of a true Christian than, according to the injunction which our Lord adds to the parable, to be doing likewise, to keep this parable, and do good not to friends only, but also to enemies; to put oneself to inconvenience, to be giving up time, spending money, and taking trouble, in order to do so.

The Christian neighborliness is practiced when one shows mercy to another in his time of need, and gives help without any thought of repayment in any way. The deed is done merely out of the kindness of the heart. Whether bread so cast upon the waters may return again does not enter the mind of a Christian moved by love and sympathy. The sufferer's need is reason enough to offer help. Like Jesus, the heavenly "Good Samaritan," let us hold out a helping hand to all in need.

Selected from 1955 "Gospel Herald"

Although the past year may have brought many heart-aches, errors and misunderstandings we can rejoice that by the grace of God we need not dwell on past sorrows. ". . . old things are passed away, all things are become new."

A simple illustration of man's aim for the new year is a child which receives a new scribbler. The old one is battered, marked and torn, but a clean new one replaces it. The first pages show evidence of neater, better work but so often by the time it is used up it looks as battered as the former one.

If our lives have not been as fruitful as God would prefer can we hear Christ pleading as in the parable of the fig tree, "Lord, let it alone this year also till I shall dig about it and dung it . . ."

". . . but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

--From "The Church Correspondent"

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Matthew 19:16-22

THE POOR RICH MAN Mark 10:17-22

One time a certain ruler of the Jews came to Jesus. He was a very rich young man and was interested in the teaching of Jesus. He had always kept the Jewish Law and wanted Jesus to know what a good man he was, so he said, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus knew all about this man, just like He knows all about you and me, so He replied, "Why do you call me good? There is only one that is really good and that is God. You know the commandments." And Jesus repeated some of them like, "Do not kill, do not steal, honour your father and your mother."

I suppose the rich young man thought, "Now I can really show Jesus how righteous I am," so he said, "All these commandments have I kept from my youth; what lack I yet?"--meaning, "What more could I possibly do?"

Jesus looked at the young man and loved him, just like He loves everyone--even you and me. Then He said to the young man, "If you would be perfect, go and sell what you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

When the rich young man heard what Jesus said, he wasn't very happy about it, and he didn't think he was such a good man after all. He was very rich and had great possessions. This was asking too much. He just couldn't give everything away. So he walked away from Jesus.

What a mistake he made! Jesus could have given him eternal life and a home in heaven which would be much better than anything here in this life. Without a hope of heaven he was a very poor man indeed.

--Rudolph Cover

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NO. 2

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

CHRISTIAN, WALK CAREFULLY

Christian, walk carefully, danger is near;
On in thy journey with trembling and fear.
Snares from without and temptations within
Seek to entice thee once more into sin.
Christian, walk carefully, danger is near.

Christian, walk cheerfully through the fierce storm:
Dark though the sky with its threat of alarm.
Soon will the clouds and the tempest be o'er,
Then with thy Saviour thou'lt rest evermore.
Christian, walk cheerfully through the fierce storm.

Christian, walk prayerfully, oft wilt thou fall
If thou forget on thy Saviour to call;
Safe thou shalt walk through each trial and care,
If thou art clad in the armor of prayer.
Christian, walk prayerfully, fear lest thou fall.

Christian walk hopefully, sorrow and pain
Cease when the haven of rest thou shalt gain;
Then from the lips of the Judge thy reward:
"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."
Christian, walk hopefully, rest thou shalt gain.

Selected from "Life Songs"

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AM I ROBBING GOD?

God has had many crimes committed against Him and has been robbed many, many times. Am I, in any way, guilty of robbing God?

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." (Isaiah 14:12-14) When Satan made this resolve he rebelled against God and all His righteous statutes.

The definition of rebellion is "opposition to one in authority and open defiance of an established government." "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." (1 Samuel 15:23) In rebelling, Satan had to take on a virtueless spirit. His very name is a Hebrew word signifying an adversary, an enemy, or an accuser. His spirit makes itself manifest through the works of the flesh, "... which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like ..." (Galatians 5:19-21). Of these grave and terrible sins, let our thoughts turn to idolatry.

The first commandment under the Old Covenant was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3) And under the New, "... thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. ..." (Mark 12:30). To not obey this commandment is giving over to idolatry, even though we are not guilty of falling down before an idol and worshipping it. Paul wrote that

covetousness is idolatry. (Colossians 3:5) Thus we can conclude there is a form of idolatry which is an expression of the heart and is not necessarily expressed by a physical act.

Surely covetousness is the most dangerous form of idolatry. It is induced into the heart by the selfish desire for wealth, fame, prestige, power, or authority. The Devil is very crafty in his ways to present these temptations in an appealing way to our carnal nature. When we yield to our carnal appetites, God is robbed of honor and glory. This pleases that old serpent, as this was his intention at the beginning. A pertinent scripture is, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Ephesians 5:5) If this leaves us in despair there is another scripture given to us, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." (1 Corinthians 10:13, 14)

Another way Satan has devised to rob God is by substitution. He makes substitutions that appeal to our carnal desires more than do God's laws.

In the last years Satan has introduced a church in his name (Satanic Church), which is highly unorthodox in its practices. A more subtle approach to organizing a church is the ecumenical movement which, under the name of Christianity, has made considerable progress in the last few years. It is advocated that the commandments of God are obsolete for this day and that a new code of laws and morals be standardized. Many other moves can be seen, also. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4)

Man has gained wonderfully in the knowledge of scientific fields here on earth and in space, which is almost

beyond human comprehension. But Satan, who came from Heaven, knows the way from earth to Heaven and may think that with the aid of man he can build a "tower of Babel" and return into the heavens.

Man's efforts are to learn God's secrets; how to create life, to retain youth, and to preserve life eternally. The Devil has already induced a false sense of peace, love, security, and contentment into the world, which man is desirous to have. God has promised all this and more to all who obey Him. As man is striving to achieve these ends we can see "the end justifies the means" attitude is taken. As a result, all around us is social unrest, protests against the establishment, racial strife, immoral conduct, and "just and unjust" wars. This is not confined to one country, but "... the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5:19) Man's desires are not governed by love, but by his selfishness, which disregards the welfare of others. Satan is using man's selfish desire to exalt himself as an opportunity to deceive by substitution, thus robbing God. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Romans 1:20).

Any Christian would say that the Bible is his standard in life. This is well and good, but he shouldn't let his standard be swayed by worldly traditions. Jesus said to those who reproved His disciples for transgressing the traditions of the elders, which they highly regarded, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:3, 6-9)

It is recorded four times (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and 1 Corinthians) in Jesus' words how we are to commemorate His death and resurrection. It is fitting and

"ARE YOU" an active member
The kind that would be missed,
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings,
And mingle with the flock,
Or do you stay at home
And criticize and knock?

Do you take an active part
And help the work along,
Or are you satisfied
To only just belong?

Think it over, member--
You know right from wrong;
Are you an active member
Or do you just belong?

Let's all work together
And each one do his part
For Jesus understands
And knows what's in each heart.

--Selected by a reader

proper to commemorate Him, who died for our sanctification and rose from the dead that we might have eternal life.

Easter, recorded once in the King James version (Acts 12:4), has reference to the Passover Feast and in other versions the original word was translated into Passover. Easter is named after a pagan goddess of spring, who was honored by a festival in April. The old gods were put aside and the festival was celebrated in honor of the resurrection of Christ. Also adopted were such customs as the egg, which symbolized young life about to be born, and the rabbit, which symbolized abundant life.

Do we need such symbols? As stated, Jesus tells us how to observe this occasion and Paul instructs us (1 Corinthians 11) how to conduct ourselves. It can readily be seen that the true observance is through Christ's Church and not the world. The world has proved this by observing Satan's substitutes.

There is another season observed by the world and Christians that is full of all the Devil's substitutions and worldly customs that man can be deceived into following and observing. Some may think this is a time when the world's hearts are softened and swayed to Christian principles. This may be true to a point, as it seems there is more kindness at this season than any other, but we must remember where this festival has its origin and that this is the world's observation.

There are no supporting scriptures in God's word, nor does Jesus instruct us to commemorate His birth. "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth." (Ecclesiastes 7:1) We know that the advent of Jesus into the world was truly a most wonderful miracle, but His mission was fulfilled by His ministry, death, and resurrection, which fulfilled this proverb, also. Through these we have the forgiveness of sins, the hope of eternal life, and the examples by which we are to live.

Another source is profane history. In the Britannica Jr., the following is found: "Children and grown-ups all over the world, even those for whom it has no religious significance, join in the Christmas spirit of happiness and good will. General observance of Christmas dates only from the fourth century. When Constantine became the protector of the church many of the pagan festivals were taken over and changed to Christian feasts. Many popular Christmas customs originated long before the time of Christianity. This was adopted by the church as the greatest feast of the year, in honor of the birth of Christ, the Light of the World." History references clearly show that this tradition is not from God, as it was instituted into the world long before the Church and not accepted by a church until about 280 years after Pentecost.

There are three scriptures (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) where Christ speaks of Satan as "the prince of this world". What has the world, unregenerated, to offer the Christian, but evil? "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." (Ecclesiastes 1:14)

Even today this festival is celebrated as the greatest feast of the year. But was this His greatest accomplishment? Have we forgotten His mission? A newborn baby is loved by almost all mankind, but Christ does not condemn man in His birth, nor does He if kept in the manger.

Surely an abomination to God is the substituting of Santa Claus for Christ. Tradition has Santa as immortal, but it is really the tradition that is immortal. Santas come from Thanksgiving to Christmas by various means, but never in the manner of tradition. It may seem foolish to go over this, but it is extremely foolish that all ages of man believe these untruths to the point their eyes are blinded to the truth. To mention all the many falsehoods of this idol worship would take more space than warranted.

"Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good." (Jeremiah 10:2-5) This, written about 600 B.C., would be changed very little if written today. "The first Christmas tree is associated with St. Boniface, who named the fir as the holy tree of Christ after he had cut down an oak tree, an object of pagan worship." (American Peoples Encyclopedia) How much more idolatrous could it be, than to condemn one shape or form of idol and turn to worship another?

If commemorating Jesus' birth in any combination of these traditions and customs is as important as some hold, would not Christ have given an ordinance to be done in a Church capacity? Let's not try to put Christ into Christmas as some do, but let's keep Him, who said, "I am not of this world." (John 17:16), separate from the things of this world.

Christmas, Easter, or any worldly tradition or custom is not Christian and was adopted by an apostate church as a means to satisfy and entice the pagans.

These seasons present a great problem with children. Even though gift giving is an old pagan custom, it is not wrong to give our children gifts. But if we neglect to give all truth and encourage participation in these profane traditions and customs, we may cause distrust when they are older and see it is all a lie. Too many children worship this Santa image and far too many parents are close behind. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) Does this mean to give them part truth and part lie? Satan has had a lot of experience in mixing untruth with truth to be appealing since he first deceived Adam and Eve. If we participate in untruth in any way, how can our children be assured of solid footing? Only by the full manifestation of the Holy Spirit can we teach them in the way of truth.

Our giving should be at all times of the year and be governed by the needs of others, not showing respect of persons or of seasons.

We, who have been blest with Christian training at home, have a responsibility to be examples to those who have not enjoyed this blessed privilege. Jesus does not want us to be lukewarm (Revelations 3:15, 16), but to be faithful, encouraging one another. If we are trying to serve God with anything short of all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, we are robbing God of honor and glory that is due His holy name.

Am I robbing God? It need not be answered; God knows.

May we fervently pray for the faults of one another. James says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen." (1 Timothy 1:17)

Written with a love for the Church,
Fred Miller, Sonora, California

HE HAS MADE EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL IN HIS TIME
(Ecclesiastes 3:11)

One is impressed with the truthfulness of these words of the preacher in the changing of the seasons. Wherever we turn we see the lavishness of the hand of our Creator.

When the season of spring approaches and "the time of the singing of the birds has come" the spirit feels a special lift. Recently we had the opportunity of hearing a recording of more than 500 bird songs and calls. One marvels at the varied musical notes from our feathered songsters; that God would take the time and the artistry to equip each one with its own special sound and expression.

A certain writer, in his observations of the English skylark, wondered how the Creator could "put a voice of such volume into so small a living thing", and went on to say: "It is a marvel--almost a miracle." Yes, one wonders at these diversified performances which run the gamut from the hoarse croak of the raven to the high-pitched and very fine notes of the golden crowned kinglet.

It has been told that the grandfather of the publisher of "The Pilgrim" would stop to listen to the song of a wild bird and of his joyful reaction to such an experience. (Ralph Waldo Emerson says, "The chance

for appreciation is much increased by being the child of an appreciator.") This quality, we are sure, was passed on to the enrichment of his family, adding something to their joy in the things of the Lord and of His works. Isaiah proclaims: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who has created all these things."

Although a study of the revelation of God in nature is enriching and inexhaustible, that still is not enough. Many live amidst its wonders but are in heathen darkness. Africa is a country replete with beauty, and its Victoria Falls, it is said, surpasses that of the falls of the Niagara. Rare orchids are lush. There are many birds of rare and varied species, yet the crude beat of the tom-tom and wails of the jungle are heard. The American Indian has been a student of nature, and some of his findings are used in the drugs of today.

"Nature has perfection, in order to show that she is the image of God; and defects to show she is only His image," observes Pascal, the French writer and mathematician. Another has said that in nature we see the hand of God, but in redemption we see the heart of God. The following paragraph gives us a colorful description of the beautiful things in their season:

"Omnipotence is in every blade of grass; the wooings of His love in every robin's call; divine purity in every lily; God's almighty cleansing power in every wave of the sea; a triumphal arch in every tree branch. I see Eternal Majesty, God, Omnipotence, Creator, mighty and magnificent, riding in a chariot of stars across every sky; and yet I see all heaven contained in a dewdrop."

Yes, each season has its own delights; but we who have the joy of believing find our summation in the prayer expressed by the writer of the hymn:

Great God, with wonder and with praise

On all thy works I look;

But still thy wisdom, power and grace

Shine brightest in thy book.

Here are my choicest treasures hid;
Here my best comfort lies;
Here my desires are satisfied;
And here my hopes arise.

Lord, make me understand thy law;
Show what my faults have been;
And from thy gospel let me draw
The pardon of my sin.

--Miriam E. Hanson
Dayton, Ohio

WHEN I HAVE GONE
Philippians 1:21-23

When I am gone, remember I'm with Jesus,
Then do not grieve because I've passed away.
Life holds so many griefs and disappointments
And will you weep because I did not stay?

'Tis only for a spell we must be parting,
Not many years on earth to us are given,
And when my Saviour tells me you are coming
I'll go with Him and welcome you to Heaven.

Grieve not because the eyes that looked on you
Shall never see your mortal face on earth again;
Rejoice because they look upon the Saviour,
Who gave His life to ransom men.

Weep not because I walk no longer with you.
Remember, I am walking streets of gold.
Weep for yourselves that you awhile must tarry,
Before the blessed Lord you may behold.

Selected by Alma Garber

HISTORICAL

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY
THROUGH THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Although the initial missionary effort of Christianity was to the Jews, it soon turned toward the Gentiles as well. There were several logical reasons for this. The first was the lack of acceptance by the Jewish people in Palestine, the very place where Jesus' ministry took place. It is a fact that only a minority of Jews were persuaded that Jesus was the Messiah. Most of them could not accept the idea that the Messiah had come to earth to die and were unwilling to believe the account of the resurrection. For too long the promise of a Messiah had been linked in the minds of the Jews with a national saviour, a king who would throw off the yoke of foreign bondage and restore Israel to its rightful place as first among nations in the eyes of God.

A second reason for turning to the Gentiles was the need of these people for a religion which was soul satisfying. The Gentile religions of the day had proved to be ineffective. Man was unwilling to believe in myths and idols, yet he did not have satisfying answers to the purpose of life. Christianity provided a definite morality as well as universalism in the act of Christ dying for every man. This concept, along with its inherent mysticism as to how such a thing could be, was satisfying, especially to many of the Greeks who were traditionally philosophically minded.

The city of Antioch was the setting for the first mixing of Jews and Gentiles in one congregation on a large scale. This city had been subject to Greek influence, having been founded by Alexander the Great. Certainly here, more than in Palestine, the Jewish community was subject to Greek influence and thus more readily tolerated the admission of Gentile converts. It was from Antioch that Paul and other Apostolic missionaries went to Asia Minor and Greece. In Antioch

the precedent was set for a mixture of Jews and Gentiles forming one congregation, the members of which were then known as Christians.

As Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire it gradually began to take on a distinctive appearance--apart from Judaism. This was true because of its universalism. All mankind now had equal opportunity before God. No longer could one family claim to be the chosen people of the Lord. However, the early Christians did not completely turn away from their Jewish heritage. First of all, the Old Testament Scriptures were accepted as being the authentic word of God. Secondly, the early Christians looked on the Gospel as the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures, and as such they felt that they as Christians were the spiritual heirs of national Israel. This seems to be clear from several passages of scripture--Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 3:7; and Philippians 3:3. This doctrine naturally alienated the more conservative of the Jews who were unconverted and along with the refusal of the early brethren to follow all the tenets of the Old Law caused sharp controversy to erupt between the Jews and Christians. Indeed, by 100 A.D. the vast majority of Christians were converted Gentiles.

Considering the antagonism which early Christians faced, it is a tribute to the faith of these early members that by the end of the second century the Gospel had found its way into all the provinces of the Roman Empire. To be sure, there were still certain areas which were definite strongholds of the faith. Of prime importance among these areas were Syria, Asia Minor (present day Turkey), and Greece. As we have seen, it was in Syria that Christianity was first accepted on a large scale. The other areas mentioned, of course, are those where Paul labored.

Another area which was especially strong in the faith was Northern Africa around present day Tunisia and Algeria. This may seem surprising, considering that today the great majority of the population of this area is Moslem. However, at this time Mohammed had not yet

been born. Just how the Gospel spread to this area is not known. Tradition according to Eusebius holds that Mark went to this area; however, we have no definite proof of this.

In spite of our lack of knowledge we do know that the church in this part of the world had a profound effect on the remainder of the Church. In Acts 18:24-26 we read of Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria, who had to be instructed in the faith as he seemed to have an imperfect understanding. Perhaps he had not received his instruction in Egypt; however, other doctrines were to spring from this area which were considered by a majority of the Church to be heretical. One of these is still held today by the Copts. The word Copt is derived from an Arabic word meaning Egyptian and is used in reference to the Egyptian Christians. This sect is still present today and is distinct from the Greek Orthodox faith in that its members hold to the doctrine of monophysitism. This doctrine caused dissention in the early Church as it held that the nature of Christ was a single being rather than being both true God and true man as a majority held.

Even though other areas had more adherents, the Church of Rome was destined to play an important role in history. Once again we do not know exactly how the gospel was brought to this area. Paul's epistle to the Romans speaks as though Christians were present prior to his arrival. Eventually Paul journeyed to that great city and was undoubtedly a striking force in the growth of the Church there. Tradition also states that Peter went to Rome where he was martyred. As the imperial capital of the Roman Empire, the city of Rome became the logical headquarters for the Church, especially later when Christianity became the state religion.

Spain has a special place in the early spread of the gospel. In Romans 15:24 we read that Paul intended to journey to Spain. Some scholars feel that he may have made this journey. Tradition states that the Apostle James brought the gospel to Spain, but there is no convincing proof of this. At first Christianity was slow

to take root in Spanish soil; however, it later became strong enough to hold out against the Moslem invasion, a feat which the North African Church was unable to duplicate.

It is difficult to trace the beginnings of Christianity throughout Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium. These areas are thought to have received the Gospel from converted Jewish, Syrian, and Greek merchants and travellers, completing the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire.

--Glen Shirk, M.D.
Stockton, California

PRAYER

I know not by what methods rare,
But this I know: God answers prayer,
I know not when He sends the word
That tells us fervent prayer is heard.
I know it cometh soon or late;
Therefore we need to pray and wait.
I know not if the blessing sought
Will come in just the guise I thought.
I leave my prayers with Him alone,
Whose will is wiser than my own.

Selected by Mary Lavy

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our spring Love Feast on April 4th and 5th of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

--Daniel F. Wolf

CHILDREN'S PAGE

UP TO HEAVEN

ACTS 1:1-12

LUKE 24:50-53

Would you like to fly like the birds? I think everyone at some time has thought how wonderful it would be if they could fly. Why should we think about flying? We don't have wings like birds. How could we ever fly anyway? But one time there was someone who went up into the air, and He just kept going up and up until He couldn't be seen anymore. And who do you think it was? I'm sure you know that it was Jesus. Jesus, when He was here, did so many things that are impossible for us to do.

After Jesus became alive again when He had risen from the dead, He was with His apostles for forty days. It was during this time that He taught them all about the Kingdom of God and what they were to do after He was gone.

On the last day He was with them, He led them out as far as Bethany where Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived. This little town is on the side of a mountain which is called the Mount of Olives because there were many olive trees there. Here Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed His disciples and told them that they were to be His witnesses to the whole world. Then a wonderful thing happened! Jesus started to leave the ground, and He went up into the sky until a cloud received Him out of their sight. The apostles were spellbound and just kept looking up—even when they couldn't see Jesus any more. They didn't even notice an angel standing by them until he said, "Men of Galilee, why do you keep looking into heaven. This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go!" Sometime Jesus is coming again. Everybody will see Him then.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus do when He went to heaven? (Mark 16:19)
2. Do you think it will be possible for us to ever fly without wings like Jesus did? (I Thes, 4:16-17) —R.C.

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

IN TENDERNESS HE SOUGHT ME

In tenderness He sought me,

Weary and sick with sin,

And on His shoulders brought me

Back to His fold again.

While angels in His presence sang

Until the courts of heaven rang.

He washed the bleeding sin-wounds,

And poured in oil and wine;

He whispered to assure me,

"I've found thee, thou art Mine,"

I never heard a sweeter voice;

It made my aching heart rejoice!

He pointed to the nailprints,

For me His blood was shed,

A mocking crown so thorny,

Was placed upon His head;

I wondered what He saw in me,

To suffer such deep agony.

I'm sitting in His presence,

The sunshine of His face,

While with adoring wonder

His blessings I retrace.

It seems as if eternal days

Are far too short to sound His praise.

W. Spencer Walton
Selected

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OPEN FACE

"But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

We regard this as one of the sublime verses of the New Testament and one well worthy of deep study, which we will try to do as gem following gem is outlined in this wonderful revelation.

"We all with open face" is inclusive of all true believers from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation until our Lord's return to claim His own. They go through this sublime, purifying and perfecting process outlined in the verse under consideration. Open face! What a picture of expression so full of meaning to us!

Moses, in being upon the mount 40 days, receiving the new tables of stone in place of the broken ones and being permitted to see the personage of God in backward view, had his face illuminated with glory to a degree of brightness that the children of Israel could not look upon him. And perhaps because of sin "their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in reading of the Old Testament; which vail is done away in Christ." (2 Corinthians 3:14) The vail remains upon all those people who do not accept Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:14)

The open face is free of the vail of obscurity as verse 18 outlines. To all true Christians is given the Holy Spirit, the divine Interpreter of the Holy Word of God. The open face enlightened by faith, hope, and charity is keenly aware of conditions that are in opposition to God. The open face is for the pure in heart who come under the blessings of God.

Jesus, the light of the world, came to us on earth with His glory subdued but shining through by His manifestations of mighty power. O the blessings of the

open face! For God has arranged to temper the glory we may behold, being made free from the bondage of sin. (Galatians 4:3, 4, 5)

Our outlook of the open face: our understanding opened (Luke 24:45); our vision cleared by the hearing of faith (Galatians 3:2); the eyes of our understanding being opened (Ephesians 1:18); all this is contained in the open face conditioned for beholding.

Blessed are those of open face,
To understand the works of grace,
To comprehend the breadth and length
And depth and height of God our strength.

That draws us closer unto Him;
The love of God that will not dim,
And points unto the narrow way
Of God our help and guide and stay.

Open to see the shining light
And things revealed beyond our sight,
Enraptured with all promise true,
Descending as the morning dew.

Open to help in kindest ways,
To those with gloomy cheerless days;
To bear the burdens of the weak,
Give cheer to those whose lives are bleak.

The open, honest, kindly face,
Content to be in lowly place,
Reflecting subdued beams of light,
And standing ever for the right.

The open face beholding clear,
Of duty's way and will not fear
To walk in dark and stormy way
To joys ahead in perfect day.

Then let us be of open face,
The chosen of God's holy race;
Let others see the witness true,
Prepare for home beyond the blue.

For time will close and witness done,
Then home beyond the setting sun;
The open face of God on high,
May welcome us beyond the sky.

---J. I. Cover

Sonora, California

(This is the first in a series of articles on this theme. Next: "BEHOLDING")

. . . AND HE SAW, AND BELIEVED

This is the record the Apostle John wrote of his own convictions when he saw the empty tomb of Jesus. John, as much as any, had been a witness of the treacherous arrest, trial and crucifixion of his Master. Though he forsook the Lord at His arrest, the record says that he and Peter followed and gained admittance to the very palace of the high priest where Jesus was taken, and he must have heard His trial. John was one who stood at the cross and saw the intense suffering and anguish of Christ when the Father forsook Him and He said "It is finished" and bowed His head and gave up the ghost. John was certain of Jesus' death.

Thomas may also have been a witness of this awful scene. He is not mentioned as one of those at the cross, but he evidently at least had seen the open wounds--in His hands, holes the size of fingers, and in His side, a spear wound into which one could thrust a whole hand.

To see someone die, especially to die a violent death, makes a vivid impression on anyone. We do not easily forget such a sight. And Thomas was one who

remembered the positive, awful death of this wonderful Jesus. Thomas loved his Lord. He is the one who spoke out when Jesus decided to return to Judea where His life had been threatened. He told the other disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." There they saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. Thomas knew of His miracles. But this was different. Now Jesus Himself was dead. And when the other disciples told him they had seen the Lord alive, he replied, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." He wanted positive proof.

When Jesus appeared to His disciples the next time, Thomas was there. Jesus gave him the opportunity to examine His wounds, and Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God." Jesus' words to him contain a blessing for us. "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

34 Belief and doubt are opposites. Respecting the truth and God's witness, belief is a characteristic of Christians, and doubt of those who will not accept Christ. Some people are harder to convince and some are hindered by pre-conceived ideas. Some of us are familiar with the story of the well-meaning old brother discussing a point of church history with another brother. When shown the actual record that proved his statements were mistaken, he replied, "Well, now it's just a question!" Even when he was shown and proven in error he still clung to his own idea. Sometimes we are like this, but it is not good. We must be ready to accept evidence and believe. Jesus told Thomas, ". . . be not faithless, but believing."

We have a completed record of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have no excuse to doubt. We have testimony from the very ones who saw Him. The Apostle John who saw and believed has much to say concerning the truth, the fulfilling of the scriptures, and the genuine signs that Jesus is the Son of God. He closes chapter 20 with this convincing

statement: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."--L.C.

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, was walking one day with a man who was frustrated. Just then Wesley saw a cow looking over a stone wall. He asked, "Do you know why that cow is looking over the wall?" "No," said the worried man. Wesley said, "The cow is looking over the wall because she can't see through it."

God's plan of salvation is a paradox to an unbeliever. Human reasoning alone can't see through it. How a holy and just God can forgive and save evil men can only be understood by looking over the wall of logic to a loving and merciful heavenly Father. The Bible says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." (1 Corinthians 2:14-15)

To understand how one is saved, you must see the purpose of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter says, "Christ . . . once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3:18)

There could be no salvation were it not for Calvary's cross. The Bible declares, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter 1:18-19)

When a person studies the plan of salvation, he encounters the term "justification." What does it mean to

be justified? Vindicated, by faith in Christ. When we trust in Him, we are released from the guilt of sin.

The term "justify" is a figure taken from the law court and used by the Bible to explain God's plan to redeem us. A man stands in God's court of justice. He is guilty; he has broken the divine law. God is his Judge.

In any court, the function of the judge is to pronounce the accused either innocent or guilty in accordance with the evidence presented, using the law as standard. The judge doesn't make a man either innocent or guilty; all he can do is declare him thus in accordance with his findings.

Now we know that when we are judged by God's perfect standard of righteousness, we are all found guilty. The Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

So technically, God the Judge should condemn us all. But here is the paradox. God justifies the ungodly if they have faith. "His faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans 4:5)

The Lord, by a gracious act, declares every believer in Christ to have a perfect standing in His kingdom. This is the grace of God. It is made possible by the death and resurrection of Christ for us.

John Ruskin was once shown a very costly handkerchief on which was a blot of ink. The owner said, "Nothing can be done with it now. It is absolutely worthless."

Without saying anything, Ruskin took the handkerchief with him. Sometime later he sent it back. To the owner's great surprise, Ruskin had made an artistic design with India ink, using the ugly blot as the center. He made the worthless handkerchief valuable.

In the same way, God takes a blotted life that is yielded to Him, and redeems and uses it. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. By God's grace the sinner is vindicated--made right with God.

More than nineteen hundred years ago, men gazed on the grimmest tragedy ever set on the stage of human

history. A stark cross was lifted up against an eastern sky with a man dying on it. The innocent Son of God hung there in torture and agony. On either side of Him a thief was dying a similar death. Surrounding Christ was a mocking, jeering mob. To the faithful few who had followed Jesus, failure and defeat never seemed more complete.

But the death of Christ was not tragedy, it was not failure, but success. The Bible says, "Now once in the end of the world hath he (Jesus) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Hebrews 9:26) "The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45)

Lionel Fletcher, the Australian evangelist, related an incident of his boyhood, which illustrates why Jesus died. "Hearing a great commotion in the farmyard, he ran there and found a hen being savagely attacked by a hawk. He was too late to save her, for she soon succumbed to her wounds. Why had she not fled to the safety of the barn with the other hens? This was apparent when from under her wings there emerged a number of little chicks--and lo! on each was blood, the blood of the mother-love that sacrificed itself for their salvation."

This illustrates why Jesus died. He gave His life in our stead. The Bible says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24)

While Christ died for the sins of the whole world, so that potentially all can be saved, yet the redemptive work of Christ only becomes effective to those who accept Him. There is a condition to be met. We are justified by faith. God by grace gives; we by faith accept.

"In 1829 George Wilson, in Pennsylvania, was sentenced to be hanged by a United States court for robbing the mails and for murder. President Andrew Jackson wrote a pardon for him but Wilson refused it and insisted that it was not pardon unless he accepted it. That was a point of law never before raised, and the president called the Supreme Court to decide.

"Chief Justice John Marshall gave the following decision: 'A pardon is a paper, the value of which depends upon its acceptance by the person implicated. It is hardly to be supposed that one under sentence of death would refuse to accept a pardon, but if it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must be hanged.' And he was hanged."

The Bible says, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23) But the offering of a gift doesn't make it yours until you accept it. Jesus Christ is a Savior, but you must accept Him before He becomes your Savior.

Jesus died for your sins. He paid for them in full. He said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) Now He beckons you to open your heart in faith and repentance and appropriate His gift of eternal life. Won't you do it now?

By B. Charles Hostetter
in the "Gospel Herald"

FEET WASHING

In John 13 the Apostle states the time, place, and purpose of feet washing. Verse one says the time of the service was "before" the feast of the Passover. And the feet washing service occurred before the Supper. Verse two says the supper was ended (that is, the preparation was ended), for in verse 26 we find that Jesus was eating with His disciples (and this was after He had washed their feet). The purpose for the feet washing was undoubtedly to add new dimensions to the disciples' Christian life.

Critics contend that feet washing was an ancient custom. When we read Genesis 18:4, we find that Abraham commanded that water be brought, and that his guests wash their own feet. Genesis 19 tells how Lot entertained the two angels and gave them water to wash their feet. Likewise when Joseph's brothers were brought into

his presence (Genesis 43:24), they were given water to wash their feet. These Scriptures portray to us the ancient custom. Jesus (being Lord and Master) went beyond custom, and took upon Himself the function of a slave (1 Samuel 25:41) and poured water into a bason and began to wash the disciples' feet. When He came to Peter, Peter opposed Him, feeling that he was unworthy to have his Lord stoop to wash his feet. Jesus however convinced Peter of the necessity of this service, for without it Jesus said, "You can have no part with me." Peter then went to the other extreme and requested that also his hands and his head be washed. Jesus replied by stating that those who are washed (baptized) need only to have their feet washed. And thus we see that this was an altogether new experience for Christ's disciples.

To bow down and wash another's feet is humiliating, and this was exactly what the disciples of our Lord needed. We need to do the same thing today, for we as they, are more inclined to be above others than to be below them. The disciples had just shortly before this disputed which one of them should be the greatest (Mark 9:34; Luke 22:34). Therefore there was need for a service that would bring them all on one level. And just so there is still a need that we consider ourselves as brethren on one common level. The feet washing service helps us to do just this, and thus prepares us to partake of the Supper and the Communion which follow.

--by Graybill Hershey
in "Bible Helps"

THE LOVE FEAST

It is the solemn twilight hour;
And on the evening air
Each drowsy bird and wildwood flower
Is whispering a prayer.

We gather in from vale and hill
Around the festal board,
And in the holy quiet we fill
The tables of the Lord

The soft lamplight upon us falls;
Our voice in song we raise;
In throbbing surges, from these walls
Rolls up our hymn of praise.

We pause a moment while each head
Is bowed before the Lord,
And then we hear a story read
From out His holy Word.

Each time 'tis read, it seems more sweet;
Its meaning deeper felt;
How, as He washed His followers feet,
The Teacher 'mid them knelt.

No humbler service could we do;
No simpler homage pay,
As, with a heart and purpose true,
His bidding we obey.

With us are men whose hair is white;
Life's storms have o'er them beat;
Yet, calm, serene, they stoop tonight
To wash their brothers' feet.

A simple meal before us spread
Our supper now shall be,
Upon such humble fare He fed
In ancient Galilee.

Our duties, 'neath tomorrow's sun,
In various planes shall fall;
But as we eat tonight, each one
The brother is of all.

Each to each others heart is knit
For the dear Savior's sake;
Oh! may, as we together sit,
The circle never break.

Many we love have gone to wait
Far, far beyond the stars.
Tonight we almost see the gate
That hides their land from ours.

Continued on page 15

HISTORICAL

CHRISTIANITY OUTSIDE THE ROMAN EMPIRE
(TO 500 AD.)

While there are fairly good accounts of the spread of Christianity through the Roman Empire beginning with that recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, little is known about the early beginnings of the Church in the rest of the world. Outside of the small amount that the Bible has recorded, it is not even known with certainty where the Apostles preached.

According to tradition handed down through the centuries, Andrew went to Scythia--the borderland between Asia and Europe in what is now Russia. He is also supposed to have preached in Greece and Asia Minor (Turkey). Thomas is thought to have gone to India and Matthew to Ethiopia. Bartholomew supposedly concentrated his missionary efforts in Arabia, but some think he may have gone to Armenia and parts of India as well. Matthias, the man elected to fill the place of Judas, may have gone to Ethiopia.

Just as Antioch served as a starting point for the spread of the gospel throughout the Roman Empire, it likewise sent missionaries eastward outside the confines of the Roman Empire. Edessa, which was to become important during the Crusades, was the first major city to receive the gospel as it spread eastward. From there it flowed into Mesopotamia where (as in the Roman Empire) most of the old religions were disintegrating. Initially the expansion in this area was rapid. However, it soon began to meet stiff opposition from the adherents of Zoroastrianism, a religion which had its beginnings in Central Asia. Consequently, many congregations were small. Even so, Christianity managed to exist in this area until Constantine espoused Christianity in Rome. In doing this he aligned the Roman Empire on the side of Christianity, giving it political overtones as well as the religious doctrines.

The cause of Christianity in Persia was dealt a severe blow when Constantine sent a letter to the

Persian king vowing to protect all Christians. While pressures against Christians in Persia had been severe, they now became almost intolerable. The kings of Persia felt that Constantine would use protection of the Christians as an excuse to conquer Persia. The fact that Christianity was able to survive in Persia at all was due to complete disavowal by its members of any connection with Rome.

The ties of Persian Christianity with that of Rome were effectively severed when the Persian Christians accepted the doctrines of Nestorianism. These were promoted by a bishop of Constantinople who held that the nature of Christ as man and God were inseparable and as such it was proper to call Mary the Mother of Christ—but not the Mother of God. This was bordering on blasphemy according to the Roman Church (by the fifth century when it became popular). However, because it separated Persian from Roman Christians, it allowed the spark of Christianity to survive in Central Asia.

Another area which received Christianity early was Armenia. Tradition states that Bartholomew and Andrew labored in this area. While this is uncertain, it is known that Armenia was the first country to adopt Christianity as its state religion. Credit for conversion of this country is usually given to Gregory the Illuminator, who with the support of King Trodt was able to win most of the people to Christianity.

This conversion was primarily a transformation from the old religion of the country. The people continued to worship in the same churches, using the same priests and honoring the same shrines. The main difference was that the things which had been attributed to the old gods were now attributed to Christ.

From Armenia the gospel spread naturally into neighboring Georgia. Thus it was that Christianity first established a firm foothold in what is now the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. However, as was the case with the Persian Church, the Armenian Church broke with the Roman Church early in the fifth century.

The other areas in which the gospel was first preached outside the Roman Empire were Arabia and India. There is a great deal of confusion about these two areas as the Southern Arabian Peninsula was often referred to as India during this time. While tradition indicates that Bartholomew labored in India and Arabia, it may have been referring to the same place, namely the Arabian peninsula as a whole. Certainly it is known that a minority of the inhabitants of Arabia had been converted by the third century.

Concerning India, it is felt that the gospel must have come over land via the trade routes with the merchants and travellers. It may be that the gospel was first brought to this area by Thomas, as tradition and many Indian Christians maintain. However, there is no proof of this.

Thus, after the first 500 years Christianity had made great strides in its spread over the world. In addition to becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire, it had become the state religion of Armenia and was beginning its spread northward. It also had managed to survive intense persecution in Persia and Central Asia. Certainly it had reached Arabia and India, although its adherents remained in the minority in these regions.

While this is the spread of Christianity as recorded by history, Paul writes to the Colossians of "... the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven . . ." (Colossians 1:23). Certainly he must have felt that there was ample opportunity for mankind to accept the gospel even at that early period of Church history.

—Glen Shirk, M.D.
Stockton, California

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our spring Love Feast on April 4th and 5th of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all.

—Daniel F. Wolf

OUR GETHSEMANE

To each of us there comes a time
A time of Gethsemane
And each burdened heart like the Saviour will say
O Father, take this cup from me.

Although our friends may not leave us then
Like Peter, James and John
In Gethsemane they seem far away
And we must travel alone.

Alone with our burden! O no, not alone
God's Angels are hovering near
And as they upheld the suffering Lord
The cross they'll help us to bear.

And although the last bitter drop we must drink
With a heart all wounded and sore
He will be our help, our hope and our strength
Until peace comes to our hearts once more.

—Annie Baker

Continued from page 11

The story once again is told
Of how He bled and died
To bring us, straying from His fold,
Back to the Father's side.

Then, with our thoughts on Calvary
As He was suffering there,
In reverent, loving memory
The bread and cup we share.

And, sitting in this heavenly place,
We think beyond the years
When we shall see our Father's face,
And He shall dry our tears.

Reluctant from this house to go,
We linger yet in prayer
While nature's vespers, soft and low,
Come on the cool night air.

—by David W. Lehigh
in "Bible Helps"

CHILDREN'S PAGE

POWER AND COMFORT FROM GOD

Do you like to know what is true and right? Some people do not know, but there is a way that anyone can know the truth. Before He died on the cross Jesus said to His disciples, "If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth."

After He had risen and was alive again, Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they were given power from on high. So when Jesus had gone back to heaven the disciples waited in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them.

On a certain day called Pentecost the disciples were all together in one place. There were about an hundred and twenty. All at once there was a sound like they had never heard before. The Bible says it came from heaven like a rushing, mighty wind. It filled the house where they were gathered together, and there appeared flames of fire that rested on each of them. The disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages. At this time there were people from many foreign countries at Jerusalem, and they spoke many different languages. But a strange thing happened--every man heard the disciples speak in his own native tongue the wonderful works of God: All about Jesus and how He was the Son of God and died so that everyone could go to heaven and be happy always--if they would only do what Jesus said.

If you want to have peace and comfort in your heart and know what is good and true and right, study the Bible and learn to love Jesus and keep His commandments. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. We cannot see the Holy Spirit, but we can feel His power. Jesus said, "He will guide you into all truth."

---Rudolph Cover

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

HE'LL UNDERSTAND AND SAY "WELL DONE"

If when you give the best of your service,
Telling the world that the Saviour is come;
Be not dismayed when men don't believe you,
He understands; He'll say, "Well done."

Misunderstood, the Saviour of sinners,
Hung on the cross; He was God's only Son;
Oh! hear Him call His Father in heaven

"Let not my will, but Thine be done."

If when this life of labor is ended,
And the reward of the race you have run;
Oh! take the sweet rest prepared for the faithful,
Will be His blest, and final, "Well done."

But if you try and fail in your trying,
Hands sore and scarred from the work you've begun;
Take up your cross, run quickly to meet Him,
He'll understand, He'll say, "Well done."

Oh, when I come to the end of my journey,
Weary of life and the battle is won;
Carrying the staff and the cross of redemption,
He'll understand and say "Well done."

—Lucy E. Campbell

From "New Songs of Inspiration"

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PART II: BEHOLDING

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

How wonderful is the precious gift of beholding! We see on every hand the wonders of creation, and to know all we see is made after the divine pattern, the blueprint of glory, by the Divine Architect, Builder, and Maker.

We see in the field of print and by reading behold the visions therein revealed, which faith transforms into reality of proportion and design.

Also we hear words, that although natural sight may be blighted, yet vision of the soul need not be impaired so that, with the handicap of natural sight being gone, can still function, and the eyes of our understanding animated by faith can still be the gateway for the truth to enter and stimulate the work of grace in the heart.

A disease that can affect the eyes of our understanding is possible as we read: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4) "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." (2 Peter 1:9)

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment,

that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." (Revelations 3:17, 18)

This condition of impaired vision can affect believers and unbelievers, but it is wonderful that there is a remedy.

It takes Jesus to open the understanding and cause those blinded eyes to see (Luke 24:45), and seeing is part of the "open face" true Christians have that enables them to behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

We need not then allow anything to dim our vision of beholding, for God has amply provided that we may clearly see as we read: "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." (Romans 1:20, 21)

"The things that are made" in creation, by us beholding and believing in the eternal power and Godhead of our Creator, increases our faith and trust in Him. And we can clearly see and understand that as there are so many things manifest to our eyes and that by so many things not seen by the natural eyes, yet by aid of a microscope the invisible world is partly opened up. So we also behold many things by faith in our Creator that are not revealed by sight. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7) "The commandment of God is pure enlightening the eyes." (Psalm 19:8)

One of the results of obedience is to know, as "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:17) What a wonderful aid to our understanding! How it enlightens our eyes! To know God's word is true and from God quickens our intellect, for here is information we can depend on--directions that are a safe guide to life eternal. And we discover that with every

commandment is also a promise that we can verify.
"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:8)

So believing in the almighty power of God, He has provided a wonderful instrument to aid in beholding.

A vision clear that in beholding
We have no fear, His ways unfolding;
The power to see, and understanding,
The way to be for happy landing.

O wondrous power that He has given,
In happy hour see way to heaven;
Increasing hope our going lighter,
No need to grope, our pathway brighter.

O happy scene for travel going,
The vail between, but surely knowing
God's hand will guide, and showers of blessing,
Close by His side and kind caressing.

The way to see, His track be knowing,
To be made free, the prospect glowing,
Of going home to be forever,
No more to roam across the river.

Through stormy way of cloud and thunder,
To perfect day, and land of wonder;
This prospect grand, this overcoming,
Faithful to stand till we be homing.

May God be praised for this grand viewing,
Our spirits raised by gladly doing;
His footsteps view, His way of travel,
Till all made new, life's skein unravel.

Then walk by faith the way appearing,
For life--not death--we may be nearing
The open gate across the river;
The glorious fate, to live forever.

--J. I. Cover, Sonora, California

EDITORIAL . . .

Our country has recently taken the 1970 census. This counting will reveal many interesting facts such as population increase, average ages, and military potential. We think of the numbering of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt and at various times later as they became a world power. It seems that the primary purpose for taking the census in Israel was to determine military potential. In fact, the numbering was only of those who could bear arms: "from twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel."

From this numbering in ancient times, the leaders would know how many men they could put on the battle field to meet their enemy forces. They depended on their numbers to a large extent. But this was not always pleasing to God. Once when David sent Joab to number the nation, it was actually at the suggestion of Satan. (1 Chronicles 21:1) David had to repent of it, and it cost the lives of 70,000 men in Israel.

The scriptures abound in examples of God's displeasure at man's trusting in his own strength. Isaiah 31:1 says, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!" Jeremiah 17:5 says, "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." To "make flesh his arm" is to trust in man and horses for an "arm" of deliverance.

One good example of the way God can work if men trust Him and not themselves is the case of Gideon against the Midianites. These people had overrun Israel, conquered them and spoiled them of food and possessions. The Lord called on Gideon to step out as a leader against the invaders and promised to give him victory. Gideon raised an army of 32,000 men, and it still seemed too few against the host of the enemy.

But God told Gideon there were too many "lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me."

First Gideon was to invite all the fearful to go back. This army must have been disheartened with former defeats and the seeming hopelessness of victory, for 22,000 men went home. But the 10,000 that were unafraid were still too many. The Lord gave Gideon a simple test of the way the men drank water to select out 300 for the coming battle. Perhaps any of the 10,000 who were unafraid would have been qualified for the Lord to use. Some believe that the way the men drank showed the ones who were most alert and watchful. Whatever the reason for this test, the coming victory was not going to depend on the strength of men but on God and His might and upon the absolute trust and obedience of the 300 chosen men. That night God delivered that host of Midianites into the hands of the 300 armed with trumpets and lanterns. The Midianites even slew each other in their haste to escape from what they thought was a mighty host.

God has not changed today. Sometimes we think that the followers of Jesus are "few and far between" and perhaps this is true. A census taken of the true children of God might show an insignificant number compared to the host of unbelievers. But it is only when we trust in our own strength that we are weak and incapable of progress. If we really trust the Lord's power and rely on Him for every battle with the adversary, we will be victorious. As one brother put it, we should let God go before and we unite behind Him and see what happens. We will make progress even if it be only progress in our own lives to bring us nearer to the Cross of Calvary.

The apostle Paul says in a seeming paradox: "When I am weak, then am I strong." In the words of Jesus to Paul, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." His strength is perfect in our weakness. --L.C.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18)

In the wee hours of the morning I had wakened from sleep and was lying there wishing for sleep to come again. The cares of the past days kept trying to creep into my mind and were only making me more wakeful.

The snow from the past several days still lay on the ground and had been getting dirty and full of foot prints where children had played. As I lay there trying to relax I pulled back the shade and looked out. The air was full of large snowflakes falling gently to the ground. I looked, and here all the foot prints and dirt was blotted out by the snow. Not one foot print marred the beautiful white blanket which covered all the ground.

Then the thought struck me with great force, "That's how the blood of Jesus can take sin-cursed man and blot out his sins and make a new creature of him. He can blot them out completely and remember them against him no more."

Just as surely as those foot prints were blotted out by the snow, so our sins can be blotted out by the blood Jesus shed. What a wonderful plan of Salvation God has planned for mankind! Can't we accept it? Then we can truly sing, "Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

--Elma Moss

Greenville, Ohio

BIRTHS

MARTIN—A daughter, Laurel Joan, born to David and Mary Ann Martin of Dalton, Ohio on April 5th.

COVER—A son, Peter Daniel, born to Leslie and Martha Cover of Sonora, California on April 10th.

THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" Cornelis van Veer was addressing a group of men sitting around a table in the meeting chamber of the cloth merchant's hall. The men were well dressed, with coats richly trimmed in fur. They wore stiff, white ruffled collars.

"You probably wonder why I have called this special meeting," he continued. "Lenaert Plovier has refused to be cloth appraiser for us."

"What! Why?" A murmur of surprise went around the table.

"I talked to Lenaert yesterday," Cornelis explained. "I told him we had re-elected him to be appraiser of woolen cloths. He said he couldn't, because of something about 'knowledge of the truth.' When I pressed him for a clearer answer, he said that he would not take the oath of office to be appraiser again. He said it was against Jesus' teachings to swear any kind of oath. Sounds like Anabaptism, doesn't it?"

"Yes, it does," said an old man with heavy gold rings on his fingers. "But who else can we get for appraiser?"

"That's just it. There isn't anyone else whom all the cloth merchants will trust," said Cornelis.

"Well, I have known Lenaert since he was a boy," mused the old merchant. "Let's see. He must be about thirty-one now. That's certainly past the rashest stage of youth. We know his parents here in Meenen. His father-in-law is a prominent man. Lenaert has a prosperous woolen business. With his position of respect in the community and his family of four children, Lenaert has much to lose for the sake of this sect. Perhaps we can persuade him otherwise."

"I know Lenaert is honest," remarked another merchant. "I don't care whether he takes the oath of office or not. I can trust him. Let's ask him to stay on without being sworn in."

That is what they finally persuaded Lenaert to do. But when the merchants went to the city hall to register Lenaert without swearing an oath, the bailiff became

suspicious. He refused such a registration, and, of course, the authorities were informed.

Because of the influence of Lenaert's family in Meenen, the inquisition made no drastic move against him. A man would merely stand outside his place of business, writing down the names of those who went in and out. Naturally, this had an adverse effect on trade. After awhile rival merchants found it troublesome to have an Anabaptist among them, and the way was opened for the authorities to act. Lenaert had to leave Meenen in Flanders and go into hiding.

Later Lenaert started a cloth business in Antwerp. His wife, who still did not believe, and his children lived with him there about one year. Deciding that Antwerp was not really safe enough, he sent his family on to Friesland in the north. He planned to go there later when he had wound up his business in Antwerp.

Since at that time Antwerp was a city with many Anabaptists, there were many Anabaptist catchers there, too. Before Lenaert left for Friesland, he met such a band of Anabaptist catchers led by the margrave. When they asked Lenaert if he had a New Testament with him, he honestly replied, "Yes." So they knew they had caught an Anabaptist. They imprisoned him in the castle in Antwerp known as "The Stone."

Lenaert's rich parents and father-in-law, who were still unconverted, hurried from Meenen to Antwerp when they got the news that he was imprisoned. His mother even spent several nights in the prison with him. The father-in-law tried to bribe the margrave to say that Lenaert was not under his jurisdiction because he had lived in Antwerp only a year.

But the margrave was just as dishonest as the father-in-law. With pretended sympathy he sent the relatives home, saying that Lenaert would soon be released and follow them.

Once they were gone, the questioning process was treacherously rushed up. But Lenaert continued in his determination to be true to God. So shortly after his parents left, he was furtively executed along with two

faithful young women, Janneken Eghels and Maeyken de Hont. It was in the dead of the night on April 4, 1560. They were put into bags and drowned in wine barrels full of water. Some brethren, who listened secretly outside the castle gate, testified that these three passed faithfully through the wine barrels into eternal life.

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

The full story and two excellent letters are found on pages 640-643 of the Martyrs' Mirror.

By James W. Lowry

Selected from "The Pearl of Great Price"

MY PROMISE

Hear the promise, I am with you,
Always, even to the end.
Through the changes that befall you
I will be your constant Friend.
I will hold your hand in trial,
I will keep you night and day;
For My presence is abiding,
I'll be with you all the way.

I'll be with you, is the promise
From the lips of God's own Son.
I'm your wonderful Redeemer;
I your victory have won.
For My power is sufficient
To sustain the church below;
I'll be with you with My presence,
Even all the way you go.

—John D. Sauder

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

READ THE BIBLE THROUGH

I supposed I knew the Bible
Reading piece-meal, hit or miss;
Now a bit of John or Matthew,
Now a snatch of Genesis.

Certain chapters of Isaiah,
Certain Psalms—the twenty-third!
Twelfth of Romans, first of Proverbs,
Yes, I thought I knew the Word

But I found that thorough reading
Was a different thing to do,
And the way was unfamiliar
Till I read the Bible through.

You who like to play at Bible,
Dip and dabble, here and there
Just before you kneel aweary,
And yawn through a hurried prayer.

You who treat the crown of writings
As you treat no other book—
Just a paragraph disjointed,
Just a crude, impatient look.

Try a worthier procedure,
Try a broad and steady view;
You will kneel in very rapture
When you read the Bible through.

—Amos R. Wells
Selected by Mary Price

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly:
and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a
brother. Proverbs 18:24

HISTORICAL

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

As we have seen previously, Spain and Portugal received the Gospel early in the history of the Church. It is known that Paul intended to journey to Spain, although there is no proof that he accomplished this. Tradition also states that James carried the Gospel to Spain; however, this is very debatable.

Although the conversion of the Spanish countryside was somewhat slow, it was rather thorough. By the sixth century very little paganism remained. Even so, it was considered a dangerous force not to be reckoned with lightly. In 589 the Synod of Toledo warned that idolatry was growing. At that time the chief challenge to Christianity was from the Teutonic invaders from the north--the Visigoths. However, the Visigoths gradually became assimilated and embraced the Catholic form of Christianity.

In 711 a great new challenge faced the inhabitants of Spanish soil as Moslem invaders quickly overran the land in their attempt to spread the religion of Mohammed by the sword. All the land was taken except a small strip of mountainous country along the northwest coast. The Moslem conquest dealt a severe blow to Christianity in Spain. Many Christians were killed or placed in bondage. In addition, many accepted the religions which the Arab conquerors had brought. In spite of the loss of many men, few were martyrs for the faith but rather lost their lives and freedom defending their homeland.

Actually, by the time the Islam religion was brought to Spain, the Church in that area was weak. This was no doubt due in part to amalgamation of the Teutons. There are examples of priests and bishops converting to Islam. Positions in the church were filled at the pleasure of the Moslem rulers. Marriages of Christian women to Moslem men became commonplace, and the descendants of these marriages were known as Muwallahs. Arabic soon became commonly spoken among the people, to the chagrin

of the conservative Catholics who were seeing a gradual dying of Latin as a language. Perhaps the most atrocious was the attempt to form a new religion based on the tenets of both Christianity and Islam.

In spite of this dark outlook for Christianity in Spain and Portugal, it is to be noted that there were those who kept the faith. The recapture of the Iberian Peninsula for Christianity was a long struggle spanning centuries. What is remarkable about it is that it was done by the Spanish and Portuguese themselves largely without the aid of other European or Christian forces. Not long after their initial conquest, the Moslems began to be divided. This allowed pockets of native resistance to spring up and eventually lead to the formation of the kingdoms of Leon, Castile, Navarri, and Aragon in the tenth century. In the Spanish struggle there were many heroes, the most well known being Rodrigo (Ruy) Diaz de Bivar of Castile, popularly known as el Cid, who was able to capture Valencia in 1094. From that time on, the Moslem influence continued to decline until 1232 when they retreated to Granada in the south of Spain, where they were able to remain for two more centuries.

The country which we know today as Portugal was originally a part of Spain under the Roman empire. However, during the reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal was formed along with the other Spanish kingdoms. Its independence from the rest of Spain was guaranteed by the treaty of Zowora in 1143. From that time on Christianity had firm control over the country as we know it today.

Islam continued to be a problem to the Spanish kingdoms after the founding of the Portuguese nation. Throughout the period of reconquest the kingdoms had gradually found it imperative to cooperate with one another; however, the unification of Spain was not complete until the marriage of Ferdinand II, King of Aragon, and Isabella I, Queen of Castile, in 1469. This marriage effectively united these kingdoms, and the rulers were known as the Catholic sovereigns.

The completion of Spanish unification came on January 2, 1492 with the capture of Granada--the last Moslem stronghold in Europe. Once again the Iberian Peninsula was counted as Christian domain. It is interesting that this conquest was not complete until 1492, the year in which Columbus, sailing under the Spanish flag, discovered the new world--an event which was to have far-reaching consequences in the history of Christianity as well as the world.

--Glen Shirk, M.D.
Stockton, California

THE PILGRIM'S WANTS

I want a sweet sense of the pardoning love,
That my manifold sins are forgiven;
That Christ as my Advocate pleadeth above,
That my name is recorded in Heaven.

I want every moment to feel
That Thy Spirit resides in my heart--
That His Power is present to cleanse and to heal,
And nearness of life to impart.

I want--Oh! I want to attain
Some likeness, my Saviour, to Thee!
That longed-for resemblance once more to regain,
Thy comeliness put upon me.

I want to be marked for Thine own--
Thy seal in my forehead to wear;
To receive that new name on the mystic white
stone
Which none but Thyself can declare.

I want so in Thee to abide,
As to bring forth some fruit to Thy praise;
The branch which Thou prunest, though feeble
and dried,
New life but never decays.

I want Thine own Hand to unbind
Each tie to terrestrial things,
Too tenderly cherished, too closely entwined
Where my heart so tenaciously clings.

I want by my aspect serene,
My actions and words to declare--
That my treasure is placed in a country unseen,
That my heart's best affections are there.

I want as a traveler to haste
Straight onward, nor pause on my way;
Nor forethought in anxious contrivance to waste
On the tent only pitched for a day!

I want--and this sums up my prayer
To glorify Thee 'till I die;
Then calmly to yield up my soul to Thy call,
And breathe out in faith my last sigh.

--Anonymous

Selected by Susan R. Coning

men that have buried your husband will carry you out also."

Then Saphira fell down and died; and the young men did carry her out and buried her by her husband.

God knows everything: He hears what we say, sees what we do, and even knows what we think.

--Rudolph Cover

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

We, the members of the Old Brethren in Canada, Ohio, and Indiana expect to hold our Annual Meeting at the Wakarusa meeting house, the Lord willing, on May 15th, 16th and 17th, and extend an invitation to all who can to come and be with us at that time.

—Elmer Brövant

CHILDREN'S PAGE

THE MAN AND HIS WIFE WHO LIED Acts 5:1-11

After the Holy Spirit had come, the Apostles were given great power to perform miracles and to convince the people that Jesus had come to life again after He had died on the cross. Many people believed the Apostles, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Because of this the people all loved one another so much that they became very unselfish and sold their lands and houses and gave the money to the Apostles to buy food and clothing for them as they had need. And the church had all things in common--no one was rich and no one poor.

Now there was a man named Ananias and his wife Saphira who sold some property and kept back some of the money and gave the rest to the Apostles. I suppose they received more money for their land than some of the others and agreed together, "We're giving as much as anyone; why should we give everything away? We'll just keep back part of it and see what happens."

When Ananias brought part of the money to the Apostles, he didn't say that he had kept back some but acted like he had given all. He wanted others to think he was as generous as the rest. Of course God knew what he had done, just as He knows what you and I do, and it was revealed to Peter by the Holy Spirit. So Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan caused you to lie to the Holy Ghost and keep back part of the price--you haven't lied to men but unto God."

When Ananias heard this he just fell down and died. And some young men took his body out and buried it.

About three hours after Ananias died, Saphira, his wife, came in to the Apostles and Peter asked her, "Tell me, did you sell the land for so much?" Saphira answered, "Yes, that's right, that was the price we received."

Then Peter said, "How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? The young

(Continued on page 15)

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

HOLY SPIRIT, FAITHFUL GUIDE

Holy Spirit, faithful Guide,
Ever near the Christian's side,
Gently lead us by the hand,
Pilgrims in a desert land.
Weary souls fore'er rejoice,
While they hear that sweetest voice,
Whispering softly, "Wanderer, come,
Follow me, I'll guide thee home."

Ever present, truest Friend,
Ever near Thine aid to lend,
Leave us not to doubt and fear,
Groping on in darkness drear.
When the storms are raging sore,
Hearts grow faint, and hopes give o'er,
Whisper softly, "Wanderer, come,
Follow me, I'll guide thee home."

When our days of toil shall cease,
Waiting still for sweet release,
Nothing left but heaven and prayer,
Wondering if our names are there;
Wading deep the dismal flood,
Pleading naught but Jesus' blood;
Whisper softly, "Wanderer, come,
Follow me, I'll guide thee home."

Selected

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AS IN A GLASS

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

"For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." (1 Corinthians 13:12)

The gift of beholding aided by a glass--though a darkened one--enables us to see into the revelations of the Lord, with understanding, without being overwhelmed. The divine builder of these darkened eyeglasses, by revelation of His Heavenly Father combined with His experience of living upon earth, knew how to build and arrange this instrument of insight into the divine nature and revelation of God, that we can be enlightened to the extent of our ability and have peace and joy in a continued attainment, all so divinely tempered that we can also attain and hold this treasure in earthen vessels, as we read: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Corinthians 4:7)

God wants us to have the treasures of His Word: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." (Matthew 6:20) What we see through the darkened eyeglasses are the treasures of His Word which are invaluable to us, and we can store them up for our use and profit. The darkened eyeglasses do not dim our vision but aid us to clearly see (Romans 1:20) the treasures of His Word that we need to know to show us the way we should walk through life upon the straight and narrow way.

The darkened eyeglasses are built into His Word, the manner of His message to us as mortals striving to gain "life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2

Timothy 1:10) and to enlighten the eyes of our understanding. (Ephesians 1:18)

God who made us knows full well our limitations of understanding and ability to perceive: "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." (Psalm 103:14) So He gave to us in the New Testament, not the awesome sound of His voice and His fearful presence, surrounded by the mighty convulsions of nature, but now He speaks to us by "His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds." (Hebrews 1:2) In a manner this tempered Word of God is so fitted to our understandings and so veils the glory that we can "with open face see as in a glass."

Our Heavenly Father, in bringing "His first begotten into the World" (Jesus), brought Him to view to be seen as any other little baby, to behold with love and wonder, and to come down to us and dwell among us, and to be naturally and spiritually related to us when we come to Him by His directive way. So we can read: "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren!" (Hebrews 2:11) Oh, the loving grace of our Lord! to be so common, lowly and understanding that we almost forget, in His meekness and lowly ways, His greatness! So as He speaks to us His love shines through, and, notwithstanding His divine--His high and holy person--we are drawn nearer and nearer to Him. Yet if we beheld Him in His divine glory we would fall flat before Him, as John did upon the Isle of Patmos. (Revelations 1:17)

Thanks be to God for the darkened glasses that bring us to His presence with ease and praise!

When we hear His Word as spoken by His ministers and when we read in His divine Book, it brings joy to our hearts, not awe at His presence. And it often wells in our hearts the desire to see His face and dwell in His presence, even as Moses said, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." (Exodus 33:18) But the comforting desire of attainment comes to us: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of: Next

judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world."
(1 John 4:17).

So this journey through this life can be a loving walk with Jesus, who also so bravely walked upon earth to show and assure us the safe way to our home. And now we can see through the darkened glasses into His Holy Word.

The darkened glasses He has made,
A shield from glory--pleasant shade,
That we behold with open face
The living wonders of His grace.

So tempered to our earthly frame,
To know the wonders of His name,
To read His Word of love and peace,
Partake of joys that never cease.

He knows our frame, He knows our ways,
And He has numbered all our days;
Outlined the way that we should go
And of His promises to know.

Then look my soul with open face,
From lowly vale to higher place;
Look up to God, with patience run,
For day will close at setting sun.

And see while on our journey here
The shining footprints fair and clear
Show where our Saviour firmly trod
That leads to home and to our God.

And feel the force of loving care
Guiding our footsteps journey fare;
He walks with us, we walk with Him
Along the way to Heaven's rim.

--J. I. Cover

Sonora, California

Next: "THE GLORY OF THE LORD".

CHERRY BLOOM

Cherries ripe and fresh from the tree are a delight to see and to eat: but a cherry tree in full bloom almost takes on personality as it holds up its chaste white blossoms for our inspection and delight. In an orchard of them, they seem to compete with each other with their dainty offerings: all the same in color and yet no two trees alike in arrangement and spacing.

On a clear spring day, one would have to be obtuse indeed not to thrill to this gorgeous display of heavenly white. Hidden beneath the protective bark they have awaited their call. In proper time the hidden life within began to stir and to function. How faithful each to his kind! What master artist fashioned each one into just the right size, and from what chemical laboratory was this perfect white compounded and spread so evenly thru each tiny petal? And from where the potent arrangement of stamen and pistil?

Truly they are God's thoughts to us as we behold the beauties and wonders of His handiwork. These newborn symbols of purity bear a message of truth to mankind.

Its white speaks of a place without sin or darkness where the glory of God shines in an unclouded day. Bright shining ones surround the throne of God to praise and joyfully serve His Divine and Holy Will. White is the judgment throne of God and white are the garments of the armies of heaven, and white their steeds.

But their leader is clothed in a "vesture dipped in blood" and "in righteousness he doth judge and make war." His name, "the Word of God," denotes this to be Jesus. (Revelations 19:13)

Grand and marvelous are the heavenly scenes. Our hearts turn in joyful anticipation to the wedding feast in heaven for something new is to be added to heaven.

From out of this sinful race of men has come a holy people, now sinless and pure. This is the bride of Christ.

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Revelations 19:8)

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." (Revelations 19:9)

Precious little white blossom! Your own new and clean white linen bears eloquent testimony to the Word of God. Within our hearts is a longing to be with that shining throng clothed in white.

---James D. Cover

Modesto, California

EDITORIAL...

The young man was very earnest although simple, almost retarded. He told me, "I read the Bible three times a day. My mother says she can tell when I am not reading enough. I get mean and hard to get along with. So I try to read my Bible three times a day."

Though he is a simple person, this young man has found a secret all of us should know. That is the power of the Word of God on the lives of those who will give themselves to it.

The Bible has not always been so available as it is now in our country. During the dark ages, the false church in control made it a crime to own or read the Word. Why was this? Because the devil knows that the Word is true and when men have the Word and read and treasure it, they are released from his bondage. It makes a difference in their lives. When men have the truth, the truth makes them free, and they cannot ever be bound in spirit though they may be in slavery, persecution, or prison.

We should develop good, regular habits of reading the Bible. It is food for our souls like the food for our bodies. So often we starve when we could feast on

this precious, nourishing Word of life. There is no health food or health program that can compare in importance with a regular diet of the spiritual health food of the Word of God.

A popular idea in the world today is that all religions are the product or result of man's inclination to worship something. Therefore all religions are equally valid and we should recognize them. This idea is gaining in popularity as unbelief in God's Word increases. Men point to the similarities in religions: moral codes, teaching regarding life after death, belief in a supreme god, etc. But the world's religions cannot be compared to the belief of God's people. Faith in Christ is not the product of man's need, though it does answer the need. The faith of Jesus Christ (Christian religion, if we must call it that) came about because God knew our needs, spoke to us by His Word, and gave us His Son (His Word made flesh) to be the Redeemer and Atoner for our sins.

God has spoken to us. If this does not make the Bible important to us, then we fail to understand our own needs. We can lose all our possessions or even all our friends with less consequence than to lose His Word. Let us read and study and let God's Spirit guide our minds, and He will make us His people and fill every need.

"...From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
(II Timothy 3:15-17)

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105)

"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."
(Psalm 119:89) —L.C.

A STORM ON THE OCEAN

When Peter Becker and others, some families twenty,
Embarked in a ship from the Dragon to flee,
They entered a vessel just sailing from Flanders,
To cross the dark waters, the deep rolling sea;

For great was the distance and long was the journey,
These people religious intended to go.
Besides, they were poor and almost without money,
So that they were packed in the vessel below.

But they were contented to dwell there together
In patience, endurance, privation and want;
Until they would land on the shores of this country
If God His protection and blessing would grant.

Among the despised and abused of all nations
Where bigoted priests could not fetter their chains,
Nor tyrants blood-thirsty usurp the dominion
To raise persecution with penance and pains.

Below in the ship they were seated together
And speaking of things appertaining to God;
As thus they were sailing out over the ocean,
A storm came up, spreading his pinions abroad.

The wind in his fury blew over the vessel;
The tempest was howling, the heavens were dark;
The billows were foaming and rolling like mountains;
The Brethren were seated below in the dark.

Commending themselves unto God in His mercy
They put their dependence and trust in the Lord
For His preservation and care of His people,
Those people who trust and believe in His word.

Submitting themselves to the billows' commotion,
Alarmed were the sailors, the captain afraid,
Until he went downward below in his vessel
And saw the composure the Brethren displayed.

He felt in his heart that God was among them;
That these were a people beloved of the Lord;
That He could preserve them from tempest and danger
As saves He the righteous from peril and sword.

The captain took courage, went back to his sailors
Who hopelessly feared that the vessel would wreck,
And told them what people, composed in the tempest,
Below in the ship would yet walk on the deck.

And afterward waiting a little while longer,
The storm disappeared in the rear.
Those billows like mountains went back to their caverns;
The ocean grew calm and the sky became clear.

And so they continued to sail o'er the ocean
With patience and hope in the fear of the Lord
To come to an end of their wearisome journey,
When two or three months they had waited on board.

T'was not in those days as it is in the present,
That steamships the ocean so swiftly did plow,
And lightning recorded the news of the nations
In language intelligent, as they do now.

The day of improvements and swift locomotion
So early as then yet but scarcely did dawn;
The ages of error and ignorance awful
And dark superstition were hardly withdrawn.

At last they were landed in Philadelphia
And soon they were scattered wide o'er the land.

The year 1958 marked the 250th anniversary of the
landing of our Brethren in America!

By James Y. Heckler 1883
Selected by Orpha Barton

Life changes all our thoughts of heaven;
At first we think of streets of gold;
Of gates of pearl and dazzling light;
Of shining wings and robes of white;
And things all strange to mortal sight.
But in the after years
It is a more familiar place,
A home unhurt by sighs or tears
Where waiteth many a well-known face;
With passing months it comes more near;
It grows more real day by day.
Not strange or cold, but very dear—
The glad Homeland, not far away,
Where none are sick or poor or lone,
The place where we shall find our own.
And as we think of all we knew
Who there have met to part no more,
Our longing hearts desire Home, too,
With all the strife and longing o'er.

Selected from "The Messenger of Truth"

I would not ask Thee that my days
Should flow quite smoothly on and on:
Lest I should learn to love the world
Too well, ere all my time is done.

I would not ask Thee that my work
Should never bring me pain nor fear:
Lest I should learn to work alone,
And never wish Thy Presence near.

I would not ask Thee that my friends
Should always kind and constant be:
Lest I should learn to lay my faith
In them alone, and not in Thee.

By Alfred Norris
Selected

OBITUARY

CLAY ELVATON WAGNER, son of Daniel Webster and Mary F. (Wolf) Wagner; faithful husband of Orpha Eliza and beloved father of Daniel Solomon and Eugene Bradford, both of Ohio, Joseph Ernest and Alvin Clay, both of Modesto; brother of Susie Wagner, Elizabeth Cover and Ernest P. Wagner, all of Modesto.

Clay was born September 8, 1899 near Quinter, Kansas, and departed this life on June 12, 1970 at the family home near Modesto, California at the age of 70 years, 9 months and 4 days.

His family moved from Kansas to near Sheridan Lake, Colorado in 1901 where he spent 12 years of his childhood. In 1913 the family moved to Reedley, California, then settled near Modesto in 1916.

He was united in marriage to Orpha Eliza Price on November 16, 1925 to which union was born four sons.

He yielded his life to the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism into the church on December 14, 1919. Called to the office of deacon in 1934, he faithfully served his Lord and church in this capacity until death.

He was preceded in death by his parents and an infant grandson, also one brother, David, at the age of 3 years, a half brother, John, also two half brothers and two half sisters in infancy.

He is survived by his wife, four sons, and seven grandchildren.

His life shall ever be a reflective inspiration to all who have known and loved him.

Services were held at the Old Brethren Meeting House at Salida by Elder Joseph I. Cover assisted by Brother Joseph L. Cover. Text was from St. John 14. Family selected hymns were 403, 458, and 69. Burial was at the Wood Colony Cemetery. Hymns used at the cemetery were 384, 425, and 433.

The Family

HISTORICAL

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY
IRELAND

As we have previously seen, Ireland was outside the influence of the Roman Empire but received the gospel message relatively early. Credit for the conversion of the Irish is usually given to St. Patrick, who was supposed to have arrived as a missionary in 432 A.D. The spread of Christianity throughout the island was rapid, aided in part by the respect for individual liberty which allowed each individual considerable freedom. Even though the role of St. Patrick has been questioned with respect to the conversion of Ireland, there is no doubt but that a strong church evolved outside the confines of the Roman Empire where it was officially sanctioned as the state religion. Some have begun to doubt the existence of St. Patrick as so much legend surrounds this figure that it is impossible to separate fact from fiction.

There was an early trend toward monasticism in the Irish Church which was probably due in part to the strong tribal character of the Irish people. It was easy for a tribe under the direction of its chief to enter into the Christian faith, centering its religious and tribal life around the monastery. Thus, monasteries became the center for scholarship and study and eventually gave the impetus to a widespread missionary effort.

Though the Irish Church differed slightly from the continental church in organization, it was nevertheless bound closely to the Church of Rome. Another characteristic of the early Irish Church was its zeal for missionary effort. This movement had its origins in the monasteries of Ireland where scholarship and Bible study were highly valued. The missionary effort of the Irish was unparalleled in the Christian Church of that day, and by the seventh century it could be said that Ireland was the center of the Christian missionary movement.

This movement had a telling effect in Europe, reaching Scotland, Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, and Italy where the Church still lacked the organization of that in Ireland. In addition, missionaries were found in the Farne and Orkney Islands and possibly Iceland.

The Irish missionaries or peregrini, as they were known, were the nonconformists of their day. Developing as it did outside the confines of the Roman Empire, the Irish Church had a more independent character than that of Rome. Often the missionaries were criticized for encouraging independence in those to whom they preached. They did not feel that the rigid ecclesiastical organization which was already a feature of the Roman Church was as necessary as knowledge of the Scriptures.

Not only were the peregrini interested in spreading the gospel but also in strengthening the faith in those places where it was already found. Often these men would travel in groups of thirteen in imitation of Christ and the apostles. These missionaries were especially important as upholders of the faith in the Frankish Kingdoms, or France, as the people there were Christians in name but had really not understood or practiced Christianity.

The best known of the Irish missionaries was Columba. He led twelve others to France where he founded many monasteries. Eventually he was forced to leave this area because of his plain preaching against the sins of the royalty of that area. He had constantly spoken against the taking of concubines by the nobility. In addition, he became entangled in a controversy with the Frankish bishops over the date of Easter. Leaving France, he continued his wandering throughout Europe--especially in Northern Italy where he died, probably around 615 A.D.

The missionary effort to England and Scotland was initiated by Ninian early in the fifth century. However, it seems to have been given renewed vigor by Columba (of the Irish royal line), who established a

base for missionary activity on an island off the Scottish coast known as Iona. From there missionary campaigns were sent to the Celtic people of Scotland. Long after his death the mission remained influential in the spread of the gospel.

While the rise of Christianity in Ireland had been spectacular, dark days were ahead. In the ninth and tenth century the Vikings or Norsemen from Scandinavia came in their longboats bent on invasion and conquest. Throughout Ireland the monasteries which had been allowed to exist in peace were raided and left in ruins. These invasions struck at the very roots of Irish faith. The faith of the Irish was quite strong, however, and here and there small groups of believers remained faithful. A second blow to the Irish came with the English conquests of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The aim of these invasions was to gain English dominance over the islands. In the fourteenth century, the Gaelic Irish did manage to regain a temporary independence. Then under the Tudors English control was extended over Ireland once more. Henry VIII had himself declared the head of the Church of Ireland and ordered all monasteries disbanded.

The Irish were loath to accept English rule and with it Protestant Christianity. Thus the Roman Catholic faith became a unifying force among the Irish and a strong symbol of Irish nationalism. An English attempt to break the hold of Catholicism over Ireland was made under James I. Immigrants were sent to Ulster, the northern province. These were English (Anglicans) and Scottish (Presbyterians). This was soon followed by an Irish rebellion in Ulster in 1641. This rebellion was put down by English forces under Cromwell, who overran the entire island.

The English attempt at control of Ireland through colonization was partially successful in that the Protestant colonists became firmly established on the island. However, this more than ever made Roman Catholicism a symbol of nationalism. The island was now polarized between the Catholic nationalists and the

Protestant colonists. The struggle was to continue as one that involved more than issues of faith.

In 1921 the majority of the island withdrew from the British Empire and was given a "dominion" status. Final ties with the United Kingdom were severed in 1948-49, leaving the Republic of Ireland independent with Northern Ireland (corresponding closely to the province of Ulster) remaining as part of the British Empire. Even this division did not resolve the strong Catholic-Protestant rift. Today such feelings are still present as evidenced by the recent strife in that country.

--Glen W. Shirk, M.D.
Stockton, California

FOOTPRINTS

I walked upon a sandy shore.

The tide was rolling in.

The breakers dashed upon the rocks

With turbulence and din.

I watched the gulls and screeching tern.

I watched the restless sea.

I walked along a sandy shore

...When someone followed me!

For I had left some footprints there,

And someone saw, and stepped

Where I had confidently walked...

I paused, and almost wept,

For I had walked too near the surf!

The tide was rolling in...

And those who walked where I had walked

Might die, where I had been!

I hurried up to higher ground

Far from the surging tide,

And prayed they'd quickly trace my steps

Lest, lingering, they died.

Footprints on the shores of Time!

God, grant me grace to be

Watchful where my footprints fall

Lest someone follow me.

By Margaret Penner Toews

CHILDREN'S PAGE

THE MAN WHO DIDN'T WALK TILL HE WAS GROWN

Acts 3:1-11

Can you remember when you first learned to walk? I don't suppose you can because nearly all of us learn to walk when we are very young. One time there was a man who was born a cripple, a lame man who had to be carried around by others. He had never known what it was like to walk and run and jump like other boys and girls. When he became a man his friends took him to the temple gate that was called "Beautiful". Here he would sit or lie down to beg money or ask alms of the people who would pass by. This particular gate of the temple called "Beautiful" was the most expensive and magnificent of all the temple gates. It was made of solid brass and was 75 feet high. The doors of the gate were 60 feet high and inlaid with plates of silver and gold. It was indeed truly beautiful.

The Jews had three times in the day when they would pray to God--at 6 o'clock in the morning, at 12 o'clock noon and at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. At 3 o'clock Peter and John were on their way into the temple when they heard this poor beggar that was a cripple asking them for money. Now Peter and John were poor people and they didn't have any money, but they did have something; and what do you think it was?

Peter said to the lame man, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I unto thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk!" And Peter took him by the hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

Then the lame man that was healed went with Peter and John into the Temple. But he couldn't keep still. The Bible says he walked and leaped and praised God.

--Rudolph Cover

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

THE STORY OF THE CROSS

Above the sweetest songs of earth,
Through all the strife of gain and loss,
Above the sounds of grief and mirth,
I hear the story of the cross.
That story is a tale of love
That wipes away the sinner's tears;
It makes him heir of heaven above
And gives him joy through endless years.

O none but Jesus bore such scorn,
No stricken lamb so meek as He;
No other brow so bruised by thorn,
No other heart so bled for me.
No other feet the winepress trod,
No other hand so freely gave,
No Savior like the Son of God!
No love like His to reach and save!

O blessed cross of sacrifice,
Where Jesus died for me, for me!
The cross of my Redeemer, Christ,
Who makes the guilty captive free!
That shining cross shall ever stand
For all of love that man can know;
Yet none may fully understand
The love that God alone can show.

—Carrie E. Breck

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HAVE FAITH IN GOD

Jesus says, "Have faith in God." By pure reasoning man can know that there is a God. All creation testifies that there is a Creator. Only the fool hath said in his heart, There is no god. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse . . ." "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. . ."

The awesome wonders of nature can teach us that there is a God, but this is as far as reason can go. And if God did not reveal Himself to man through intelligent communication, we would have to remain like the Greeks at Athens: To us He would be an "unknown God." But God has not left us in such ignorance about Himself. He has spoken to man and given to us His holy Word which tells us that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth and all that in them is. And that He made man in His own image---capable of communicating with Him. Thus we are told that God "walked" in the garden of Eden and talked with Adam.

Up to this point science may well agree with the Biblical account of creation; but at this point there is a radical departure, and faith must supplant reason. However it is not a blind faith but is founded in the testimonies of faithful men of old to whom God showed Himself in various ways at different times and spoke to them. For in the first chapter of Hebrews it is said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds . . ."

God spoke to Abel in some manner and made him understand that he had offered an acceptable sacrifice and that he was righteous, and this testimony still speaks to us. Enoch "walked" with God and was told of the impending judgments that are coming upon the ungodly. Noah found "grace" in the sight of God and was warned of the great deluge that was coming on the earth, and he built an ark to the saving of his house and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. God made His "glory" to pass before Moses, and Moses saw His form and heard the proclamation of His goodness and holiness. When the seventy elders of Israel were in Mount Sinai, "They saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." (Exodus 24:10, 11)

The prophet Isaiah "saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:1-3) Ezekiel saw a similar vision of the glory of God. (Ezekiel 1:4-28) When Jesus was here He said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Thus we are told in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews of a great cloud of witnesses who walked in faith with God and were accounted righteous. "For without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

—Daniel F. Wolf

Modesto, California

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord!" (2 Corinthians 3:18)

The darkened glass, which is the loving manner of God to kindly show us the glory and truth of His Holy Word through Jesus Christ our Lord, allows us to behold the glory of the Lord so plainly revealed in a way that we desire to be drawn closer to God.

The dawning rays of glory that precede the arising of "the Sun of Righteousness" (Malachi 4:2) come to us in the angel Gabriel's message to Zacharias of the coming forerunner, John the Baptist, their promised son. What a stirring time indeed it was in the renewing of Zacharias' faith and speech and his divine prophesy of the mission of his son! (Luke 1:68-80)

People began to awaken from their dark and hopeless sleep to the dawning of a brighter day and were brought to repentance and baptism awaiting in the dawning light, the glorious sunrising of our Lord. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." (Isaiah 9:2, 60:2)

And so the glory of the Lord burst upon the people, especially those who were watching and waiting for the fulfilling of prophecy.

There was glory in the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary, the lovely innocent maiden, and upon glory entering her she began to say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord!" (Luke 1:46-55)

Since that time millions of followers of the Lord have had joy enter into their hearts in like feeling of glory revealed at first hearing and grasping of these wonders of glory: Jesus the light of the world revealed in His birth and increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. Simeon, one of the last saints of the Old Testament, holding the baby Jesus in his arms and saying: "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy

salvation" shows how fully united the prophets of old were with the "new and living way" Jesus has brought. This glory entered the hearts of those who were alive to witness this glorious transfusion.

John the Baptist, observing the light and glory, was made to exclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus requested to be baptized, saying, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matthew 3:15) Glory was revealed to those who beheld this sacred scene of Jesus praying and coming up out of the water: "Lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16, 17) Our heavenly Father in opening the heavens to Jesus surely let out to man a lot of glory.

We cannot at this time mention all the scenes of glory found in the New Testament, but it is your privilege, dear reader, to open up its pages, in every one of which glory is revealed. It is not a blinding light but presents scenes of glory that we can behold with love, joy, and weeping, outlining and showing to us the noblest and perfect presence of the Son of man which is the Son of God.

What joy He brought to so many distressed and afflicted with the maladies of soul and body, healing their diseases, raising the dead to life, and forgiving sins, cleansing the heart and giving hope to poor lost sinners! He is our dear friend, showing to us His heavenly Father's will and following that will through life--Gethsemane to Calvary. There is glory in His suffering, crucifixion, and death because this dark and fearsome background of sorrow, pain, and death is all made glorious: clearly portrayed upon the canvas of eternity so brightly and illuminating His glorious victory over Satan, sin, and death. Thus was demonstrated the power of the eternal living God to retrieve and change His earthly body to the heavenly glory of His own majestic personality, investing and blending the

earthly and heavenly conditions. To see Him as He is is to be with Him, to be like Him and follow Him and be "joint heirs" with Him in glory. Thus the heavenly and earthly glory blends together in Jesus Christ our Lord and King.

This glory revealed by reading is more deeply engraven upon the hearts of those who fully and wholly accept Him.

The glory of the Lord, found in His written Word,
The way of God unsealed, His love to man revealed,
As coming to this earth, reveals His shining worth,
Showing the narrow way, leading to brightest day.

On earth His pathway trod, the very Son of God,
Because that life and light, and standing for the
right,
Brings peace unto each heart: who never will depart
From God so very near, we triumph over fear.

O who will walk with Him until earth's lights grow dim,
Supported from above, whose way with us is love,
And with His tender care, is with us everywhere
Upon the shining way as we still watch and pray.

What joy to thus be found treading the glory round,
With loving ones to go, made whiter than the snow,
As sin recedes away, and virtues with us stay
To help along the road and lift the heavy load.

O joy and peace and rest, sun setting in the west;
Though tired and travel worn, looks up until the morn
Breaks over golden hills, and glory over fills
The ransomed sons of bliss soon be where Jesus is.

Then follow glory's trail; we cannot fall or fail,
For Jesus leads us on until the night is gone;
Sun sinking in the sea of vast eternity,
We land on heaven's shore, and time shall be no more.

Next: "ARE CHANGED"

--J. I. Cover
Sonora, California

THE FAITH OF THE CHRISTIAN

The faith of the Christian is simple and sweet,
Yet it's precious, more precious than gold.
It's faith in the Saviour that makes us complete,
And that opens the door to the fold.

The faith of the Christian is steadfast and sure,
And it holds against tempest and shock.
Its sturdy foundation will ever endure,
For it's built upon Jesus, the Rock.

The faith of the Christian is vibrant and warm;
It's a virtual fountain of youth.
It constantly bubbles in excellent form,
For its source is the wellspring of truth.

The faith of the Christian is throbbing and strong;
It's the current that flows through the line.
Though unseen by others, it wafts him along,
And empowers for service divine.

The faith of the Christian is humble and low;
It is happy in mansion or shack.
You'll find it abiding wherever you go,
For it dwells on both sides of the track.

The faith of the Christian is lofty and high,
Like a towering column of cloud.
Though dwelling on earth, it has roots in the sky;
And it's never defeated nor bowed.

The faith of the Christian is tender and kind;
It's as gentle and soft as a dove.
It's home to the homeless, and sight to the blind;
It's a marvel of infinite love.

The faith of the Christian is tempered and tough,
Like a bulwark of steel or of stone.
Repelling all onslaughts, no matter how rough,
It withstands, though abiding alone.

The faith of the Christian is tested and proved;
It quite often is tried till it hurts.
But, after the battle, it still is unmoved.
Oh it's wonderful, Friend, and it works.

The faith of the Christian is patient and mild;
It is never repulsive nor rude.
It waits with the old and forgives with the child;
And its fruit is delicious and good.

The faith of the Christian is reckless, but right;
It will venture where brains fear to tread.
It easily overcomes chasm or height,
For it springs from the heart, not the head.

The faith of the Christian is hard to explain;
It's not smelled, tasted, felt, seen, or heard.
Enduring through ages, it so shall remain.
It's eternal. It's built on the Word!

—Alvy E. Ford

Sinful pleasure can ruin your appetite for the things of God.

Paul had a young co-laborer in the gospel by the name of Demas. Because his appetite for the pleasures of the world was greater than his thirst for God, we hear very little of young Demas. Paul wrote his entire history in nine words: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

Many of us have no appetite for spiritual things because we are absorbed in the sinful pleasures of this world. We have been eating too many of the devil's delicacies.

I once heard the story of a man walking down the road. Behind him followed a pig. A friend called to him and asked him how he got the pig to follow him. He said, "It's very simple. Every step I take, I drop a bean, and the pig likes beans." Satan goes along the road of life dropping his beans, and we are following to eternal destruction. —Billy Graham in "The Secret

THE HEAVENLY VISION

Not many, if any, have experienced such a heavenly vision as did the Apostle Paul; but are we obedient to what we have been shown by the Lord? The apostle said, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (Acts 26:19)

When the Lord appeared to Saul (Paul) on the road to Damascus, Paul fell to the earth; then trembling and astonished said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" They have not yet fallen to the earth before the Lord; they do not yet know what it is to tremble and be astonished before Him. They have not been obedient to what they already know the Lord wants them to do.

Sometimes the Lord allows everything we prize and highly value to be wiped away from us, in order to bring us to the place of obedience. When we have things or persons we love, we sometimes cling to them and forget God. When the last of the possessions or friendships we too highly value is beyond our fingertips, we have nothing or no one but the Lord. That is just the place in which God wants us.

God is sovereign; in all things He must have pre-eminence. What right do we worms of the dust have to demand our rights or way? Ignorantly and stubbornly we will try it in about every circumstance that comes into our lives, but patiently and lovingly God deals with us as with children, kindly shielding us from the dangers of the self life.

God is tender, merciful, of great compassion, and loving. He loves us so much that He will not be satisfied with partial surrender or obedience. He must have all of us.

Because of Paul's heavenly vision he was able to say, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." (Philippians 3:8) Andrew Murray said, "Get this matter settled at once. Remember God's rule, all for all. Give Him all. He will give you all. Consecration avails

nothing unless it means presenting yourself as a living sacrifice to do nothing but the will of God."

--Beryl Musselman

From the "Evangel Herald"

HYMN STUDY

THERE IS A FOUNTAIN FILLED WITH BLOOD.

William Cowper was born in Berkhamstead, England on November 26, 1731. He was a sickly child. But he had a sweet and godly mother who helped him physically and mentally, giving him the emotional security his little heart craved.

Then came tragedy. When he was only six years of age, his mother died. His father, a stern man who did not appreciate the artistic spirit of his son, sent little William off to boarding school.

It was a miserable place. The older children kicked and flogged Willie Cowper. The school masters were equally cruel. All of this scarred his mind. And finally, at the age of nineteen, he attempted suicide.

But miraculously, his life was spared, and kind friends sent him to St. Albans—a place for the mentally ill. The superintendent, a Dr. Cotton, took a deep interest in his patients, visiting and praying with them each evening, and telling them of the healing power of the Great Physician.

Although William Cowper appreciated Dr. Cotton's concern, his mind could not absorb the forgiveness of God for his iniquities. He would put his head under the covers and moan, "O my sin! My sins! Would God there were a fountain where I could cleanse them!"

The Lord heard the prayer of the penitent and visited him with a season of spiritual refreshing. Let me quote Cowper's own words regarding this divine visitation. He says:

"The happy period which was to shake off my fetters and afford me a clear opening of the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus had now arrived. I flung myself into a chair near the window and seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The verses I saw were in the third chapter of Romans: 'Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to manifest His righteousness.' Immediately I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I saw the sufficiency of the Atonement which He had made, my pardon in His blood, and the fulness and completeness of His justification. In a moment I believed and received the Gospel."

In the light of Cowper's testimony, we can see the experience that lies behind the immortal lines:

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I though vile as he
Wash all my sins away."

You may be interested to know that the Bible does mention such a fountain. In Zechariah 13:1 are these words: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness."

Thank God for "the fountain filled with blood"! There is cleansing for every stain—there is forgiveness for every transgression!

On April 25, 1800, William Cowper passed from this earthly scene, a smile of victory on his face!

We too rejoice to see that fountain in our day for "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin."

Selected from the "Log of the Good Ship Grace"

HISTORICAL

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY
GREAT BRITAIN

Christianity was introduced into England in the sixth century from two different sources. Although there is evidence that the Gospel had made its way to the island, it had not yet been firmly established by this time. At this time Augustine, a papal emissary from Rome, was able to convert King Ethelbert in 597. Columba, the famous Irish missionary, had founded his colony on Iona, an island off the Scottish coast. Thus, the influence of the Celtic missionaries was to extend southward from Scotland while that of the Roman missionaries was extending northward.

Columba reportedly made many missionary journeys to Scotland where he is credited with converting the Picts. He is said to have had a great zeal for the Lord. Many times he faced the pagan Druid priests and showed the power of the Lord through miracles. One of his achievements was the conversion of Brude, King of the Picts, which no doubt vastly aided his efforts in the conversion of this people.

In addition to Columba, other Irish missionaries had an active part in bringing the Gospel to Scotland. Earlier Ninian had labored among the Southern Picts. Kentagian, a contemporary of Columba, is said to have founded the Church at Glasgow. Of course, numerous missionaries from Ireland were to follow the path to Scotland, not only for gaining new converts but also for strengthening the existing church.

While the Celtic missionaries were laboring in the north, the work of Augustine continued in the south. Augustine had been commissioned by Pope Gregory to bring the Church in England closer to the Roman fold. When he arrived, he found a rather weak church. Geographically he confined his labors to southern England where, as mentioned above, he was able to convert King Ethelbert. By shrewd administration he was able to greatly

strengthen the church. Some of his methods included putting pagan shrines to Christian use, such as the one at Canterbury, and substituting Christian festivals for pagan ones at the same time of the year.

Roman Christianity suffered a severe blow with the death of King Ethelbert in 616. He had been preceded in death by Augustine in 604. His successor, Eadbald, had not been converted and clung to the pagan beliefs of the land. This caused a great pagan return with many Roman priests forced to flee to Gaul. The tide was turned, however, by the conversion of Eadbald. Unlike Ethelbert, Eadbald became quite active in his attempts to eliminate paganism from the land. He set about destroying the idols of the pagan religions. His devotion spread through his family, and it is said that one of his daughters became a nun.

The first active spread of Roman Christianity from southern England came with the marriage of Edwin, the King of Northumberland, to the sister of Eadbald. Although Eadbald was initially reluctant to allow his sister to marry a pagan, he finally consented with the promise that her religion would not be interfered with. Indeed, she was accompanied by one Paulinus, whose purpose it was to convert these people.

Eventually Edwin and many of his subjects were baptized. Now an active program of conversion was begun. Edwin's father had been a Christian in name but had continued to worship the pagan gods with little understanding of Christianity. The work went on in this area until Edwin's death in a battle. With this Northumbria became very unstable, and Paulinus and Edwin's queen were forced to return to the south.

While the influence of the Celtic Church was great and it had been largely Irish missionaries who had brought the Gospel to England and Scotland, the Irish Church did not have the organization that the Roman Church had. With the labors of Aidan in Northumbria about 635, the two churches came in closer contact. With the Synod of Whitby in 664 A.D. the whole of England was made to conform with Roman practise. However,

Celtic thought continued to influence Christianity in Britain for a long time thereafter.

The differences between Roman and Celtic Christianity were a source of difficulty for the early church in Britain. While both held the pope to be supreme in ecclesiastical matters, the Irish favored a looser organization with more emphasis on the monastic life. In addition, there was a conflict over the date of Easter. Eventually the Roman date was adopted.

The Church of England and Scotland was to take over the missionary role of the Irish. Just as the Irish had, these people became zealous enough to withstand the invasions of the Norsemen which were to come. This zeal was no doubt the source of inspiration for Anglo-Saxon missionaries to Gaul, the Low Countries, Germany, and Scandinavia.

—Glen W. Shirk, M.D.
Stockton, California

THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN OF PRAYER

There's a garden where Jesus is waiting,
There's a place that is wondrously fair;
For it glows with the light of His presence,
'Tis the beautiful garden of prayer.

There's a garden where Jesus is waiting,
And I go with my burden and care,
Just to learn from His lips words of comfort
In the beautiful garden of prayer.

There's a garden where Jesus is waiting,
And He bids you to come meet Him there;
Just to bow, and receive a new blessing,
In the beautiful garden of prayer.

O the beautiful garden, the garden of prayer,
O the beautiful garden of prayer;
There my Savior awaits, and He opens the gates
To the beautiful garden of prayer.

—Eleanor Schroll

BIBLE WORD STUDY

Atonement, the expiation of man's sins by Christ--Oxford.

Under the old law much effort was spent to pay the penalty and make amends for sins and that man might be qualified for life eternal. Praise the Lord for His gift through His Son "by whom we have now received the atonement." (Romans 5:11)

Save, to rescue, preserve, deliver from danger, misfortune, harm; bring about spiritual salvation of, preserve from damnation--Oxford.

Our Bible frequently uses this word and we can understand its worth to us, that Jesus saves. "God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." (II Timothy 1:9)

We have a high calling; our Master is not only just, He is also merciful and wants us to have peace with Him, to love Him and praise Him and depend upon Him. Our lives pass too quickly to spend any time other than in His will and service.

--Martha Cover

COMMUNION NOTICES

The Fall Lovefeast of the Salida Old Brethren Church will be held, the Lord willing, on October 17th and 18th at the Salida meeting house, Salida, California. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

--Daniel F. Wolf

The Fall Communion Meeting for the Canadian members will be held on September 27th, the Lord willing, at the Amos Baker residence near Maple, Ontario. Members and friends are cordially invited.

--Elmer Brovant

CHILDREN'S PAGE

A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN Acts 9:1-9

Have you ever heard of a man called Saul? Saul was his Hebrew name and Paul was his Roman name. As a young man his life had been devoted to the study of the Law. His teacher was Gamaliel, the most famous teacher of the law at that time. Paul had studied so hard, I suppose, he didn't have time to see Jesus, although they both lived at the same time. What he knew of Jesus he probably heard from the Jewish teachers and lawyers. This so-called educated class of people thought Jesus was a fake. They supposed the redeemer of Israel was to be a king--that He would destroy their enemies, the Romans, who ruled over them.

After Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world, the people who believed in Him were called "Christians." At this time the Christians had been persecuted in Jerusalem and some had escaped and fled to the city of Damascus. Saul was given authority from the high priest to pursue the Christians to Damascus and arrest and bring them back to Jerusalem.

As Saul and his company (people of importance never traveled alone) came near Damascus, suddenly there shined a brilliant light about Saul and a voice from heaven said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

And Saul falling down to the ground asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

And the voice from heaven replied, "I am Jesus, whom you persecute."

Then Saul was astonished and afraid and said, "What will you have me to do?"

And Jesus said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told you what you must do."

When Saul got up from the ground he was blind, and someone had to lead him by the hand. And they brought him to Damascus.

Note: In the next Pilgrim we will learn what happened to Paul in Damascus.

Question: Did the men who journeyed with Saul hear

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NO. 9

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

THE CLEFT OF THE ROCK

There's a cleft in the Rock of Ages,
Where my soul may safely hide
While the storms of life are raging
And the billows roll o'er the tide.

There is peace for the soul that hideth
In the Rock that is higher than I,
For the soul that only confideth
And the cleft of the Rock will try.

Oh, soul, thou who now art weary,
To the Rock do come for rest,
Come to Him who only can cheer thee,
To the dear loving Saviour's breast.

Oh, the cleft of the Rock
Where my soul may hide,
While the storms of life are raging,
And the billows roll o'er the tide.

—S. E. Good, 1905

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YE BELIEVE IN GOD, BELIEVE ALSO IN ME

In a former article we have shown that man can understand by the wonderful works of creation that there is a God. And because of this evidence, there may be many who profess to believe in God. Yet this confession may mean only a belief that there is a God. It may not include a belief in the Word of God that He created man in the way the Genesis account says He did, and that He made woman from man. There may be many who say they believe in God and at the same time contend that man evolved from a singular minute form of life over an extended period of time to eventually become a man.

On the other hand there may be those who, like God's ancient people Israel, believe in the true God and Creator but do not believe in Jesus Christ that He is the Son of God. So we find Jesus, in the fourteenth chapter of St. John, encouraging and strengthening His chosen disciples and saying to them, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

In the light of New Testament revelation, it is evident that one cannot truly believe in God and at the same time not believe in Jesus Christ that He is the Son of God. For, "Whosoever confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." (I John 4:14,15) And, "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his son." (I John 5:11)

One cannot truly believe in God even as creator and not believe in Jesus Christ. For, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten

of the Father, full of grace and truth." (St. John 1; 1,3,14) Again in the first chapter of Hebrews it is said that God hath spoken to us in these last days by His Son who is the express image and glory of God, "by whom also he made the worlds."

Perhaps because of the severe chastizement which the Jews suffered for worshipping other Gods, and because the first commandment had said, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:" and not giving proper heed to the Genesis account of creation, nor yet what was written in their prophets and the Psalms about their coming Messiah, they could not accept Jesus as the Son of God and equal with God. In the creation God had said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . ." showing that there is a plurality in the Godhead.

The prophet Micah had said, "But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2) Isaiah also prophesied of a "Wonderful Child" that was to be born to Israel on whose shoulder the government should rest: "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." (Isaiah 9:6,7)

Thus it is evident that if those unbelieving rulers of the Jews had not closed their minds to a right understanding of their Scriptures, they could have understood that their Messiah would be from heaven and of the Godhead.

Though this was a vital question which first confronted the Jews, it seems just as vital and applicable to us now, and to all men in every age since Jesus was here. Naturally, it should be more preferable to hear one confess a belief in God than to deny Him. But a

simple confession of a belief in God and not at the same time believe in Jesus Christ may be no better than no belief at all. Here is where we must try the spirits when we come in contact with some who may say they believe in God but could not confess a faith in Jesus and His relation to God in the works of creation and redemption. For, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (I John 4:2,3)

To truly believe in God, then, is much more than to simply confess that He is; or even to believe that He is the Creator of the universe. To truly believe in God is to believe all the revelation in the Word of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? ... He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. ... And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that

is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. (I John 5)

—Daniel F. Wolf

ARE CHANGED INTO THE SAME IMAGE

"But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Corinthians 3:18)

The divine miracle of changing is one of the amazing processes working in the lives of Christians to bring about complete harmony and likeness unto our dear Lord, and furnishing the spiritual growing stage of every child of God unto divine perfection.

This divine process the Apostle Paul outlines in this gem verse we are considering in these articles. We cannot bring about this great change by ourselves any more than we can regulate the physical growth of our own bodies in developing to maturity. We can only eat of the food God has given, and the development goes on as Paul says, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:13 Read to the end of the chapter.) So the changing process to at last have the same image, the same likeness, is the process of development; growing "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." (II Peter 3:18)

To behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord is simply to study, read and obey His Holy Word which portrays the glory of the Lord so much in His giving the divine directions and foods for the souls. The growth in grace is attended by the powerful aid of the Holy Spirit that the divine arrangement may proceed according to His mighty power." "Who shall change

our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:21) This is the ultimate attainment following our growth in grace and being faithful unto death. Is it not a thrilling experience—this gradual and continued growth in grace to have joy in the attainment of this feeling in our hearts? We read, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new." (II Corinthians 5:17) Yes indeed, we read that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come." (I Timothy 4:8) We behold the goodness of God that we can have this "joy unspeakable and full of glory," (I Peter 1:8) here in this life that helps to bridge the gap of death and to realize that eternal life here when we fully believe on Him. And so we can pass through death unharmed, undiminished, but growing on and on as Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (St. John 11:25,26)

The complete and finished work, the glorious image of our blessed Lord Jesus revealed in the gospel of our Salvation and His virtuous character of compassion for us shines outstandingly in the pages of His divine word. It brings to us who believe in Him the longing desire to see fulfilled in our lives the loving words, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (I John 3:1-3) This is a great, though gradual, change, and we read, "Seeing ye have purified your

souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (I Peter 1:20) Indeed a part of this divine work of being changed into the same image (of Christ) belongs to those in the work of grace to fulfill in our lives the fervent desire of our hearts that this change may be accomplished fully, completely and eternally, body, soul and spirit to be joined together in His presence forevermore.

The change of life, God's work of love;
Begun below, finished above;
This work of grace and change of heart,
Till we of God become a part.

We see by faith our living Lord
Portraying in His Holy Word;
His grace and way we clearly see
Till He was hung upon the tree.

We bear our cross, we walk with Him
Until the evil ways grow dim;
Our hearts aglow; the way grows clear;
We trust in Him and have no fear.

For we behold His mighty power
Leads on until the glorious hour
When He emerges from the tomb,
Gave hope to those who lived in gloom.

As He arose, so we can too;
Behold by faith a clearer view
Bridging the gap—the river flow,
As through to life we onward go.

O change divine, O loving grace,
That through this life of time and place
We travel on the narrow way,
Leading unto eternal day.

And see at last shining afar,
The bright and glorious morning star
Shows soon will shine, our souls to bless
The rising Son of Righteousness.

God grant that you and I may see
This morning of eternity;
Changed to be like our Lord on high,
Coming to meet us in the sky.

—J. I. Cover
Sonora, California

Next: FROM GLORY TO GLORY

PREVENT THEFT—LOCK YOUR CAR!

Recently I noticed a sign on the bumper of a car with these words: "Prevent Theft—Lock Your Car." As I thought on this statement I realized that it is good advice. It is wise to lock a car and by doing so make it hard for anyone to commit the crime of stealing, not to mention the wisdom of protecting a person's property.

But there is something desperate and sad in this sign, too. It points to the condition of the people of the world around us. It hints that "Of course you will be robbed if you don't lock your car." It almost places responsibility for the act of stealing on the one against whom the crime is committed: "If you leave your car unlocked, it is your own fault if someone steals the car or your possessions."

Perhaps this is making a big issue over a little statement, but is there not something in the devil's operations that is similar to this little warning? Satan would like to accuse God of protecting the righteous and working against the ungodly as he accused God of protecting Job. He would like men to believe that there is an excuse for sin or a reason

men sin other than that their hearts are not right with God. He would like to accuse God of "leaving the car unlocked" and so to shift the blame for sin.

In reality, the reason men sin (or steal from a car) is because their hearts are not cleansed and they do not want to follow God or let Him rule their lives. Therefore the only way to prevent sin (or theft) is to have the heart changed—washed in the blood of Jesus. This is God's answer to sin and it is the only real prevention. If the cars are all locked, (if there is no temptation) there still would be unrighteous hearts and the problem is not solved.

Do we believe it would be better if God would remove temptation from our lives? We pray "lead us not into temptation", and we certainly are wise to stay as far away from it as possible. The Bible says, "Abstain from every appearance of evil." We are vulnerable to sin if we deliberately go where there is temptation. If we do not want to drink, then we should stay out of the bars. If we do not want to be tempted to steal, we should not try the doors to see if they are unlocked, or peer inside to see if there is anything valuable there.

But still we cannot avoid temptation entirely. Many times we cannot help what we see or what comes into our lives to demand a decision. But the only real answer is God's answer. Jesus was made "to be sin for us... that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Corinthians 5:21) "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (I Peter 2:24) "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law (Thou shalt not steal.) might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:3,4)

The new moral code of today has what is called "situational ethics" or special consideration for

certain situations. They say that sometimes wrong might not be so wrong. If the door is left open and a young fellow needs the flashlight on the seat, it is not as bad as if he breaks the window to get it. Adultery in a case of loneliness or separation is not as bad as some cases of unfaithfulness. But is there really any difference? Sin is sin. It is an offence against the living God. It cannot be excused or explained away. It can only be repented of and forgiven. In God is no variableness. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. The only real prevention for theft or any other sin is God's way. He has the prevention and the cure for sin and the reward for faithfulness. Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) —L.C.

NO TIME FOR GOD

You've time to build houses, and in them to dwell,
And time to do business—to buy and to sell,
But none for repentance, or deep, earnest prayer;
To seek your salvation you've no time to spare.
You've time for earth's pleasures, for frolic and fun—
For her glittering treasures how quickly you run,
But care not to seek the fair mansions above,
The favor of God or the gift of His love.
You've time to take voyages over the sea,
And time to take in the gay world's jubilee;
But soon your bright hopes will be lost in the gloom
Of the cold, dark river of death and the tomb.
You've time to resort to woods, mountain and glen,
And time to gain 'knowledge from books and of men;
Yet, no time to search for the wisdom of God.
But what of your soul when you're under the sod?
For time will not linger when helpless you lie;
Staring death in the face, you will take time to die!
Then what of the judgment? Pause, think, I implore.
For time will be lost on eternity's shore.

From "The Gospel Reaper"
Selected by Orpha E. Wagner

OBITUARY

EARL RAY SEELY, a native of Michigan, was born on October 24, 1893 and passed away on September 5, 1970, living almost 77 years. His early life was spent on a farm in the company of his grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters. He enlisted in the navy in 1917 and served his country for over a year during the first world war.

After his term of service, he was married for seventeen years and then moved to California in 1938. His wife, Mary, preceeded him in death.

Earl has lived in the west for the last thirty years working mostly as a farm laborer and spending time in the Atwater area, in Oakland, in the Baker, Oregon area, up to Alaska, and most recently around Sonora. During the last eleven years, he made a permanent home at Cover's Apple Ranch near Tuolumne, California.

Earl was a lover of the outdoors. He lived frugally and without many comforts. He enjoyed to walk and would cover many miles in an early morning outing. Since his retirement, he has been fond of children and pets from which he had his greatest pleasures.

He was a strong and willing worker, suffering from heart trouble only in his last few years. He leaves many friends, neighbors and acquaintances who are grieved at his passing.

Funeral services were held at 10:00 A.M. on September 8 at Heuton Memorial Chapel in Sonora conducted by Joseph I. Cover assisted by Joseph L. Cover. Pallbearers were Marvin Crawmer, William Crawmer, Carl Eikmeyer, Joseph Lingo, Joseph Wagner, and Elbert Woodhams. Burial was in Carter's Cemetery in Tuolumne.

As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

—Psalms 104:15,16

HISTORICAL

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

GAUL (FRANCE)

Although the Franks undoubtedly received the Gospel via early missionaries and traders from other parts of the Roman Empire, they were quite slow in accepting it. Even the conversion of Clovis near the end of the fifth century did not bring acceptance of the Gospel by the masses. Indeed, this was a critical time for the Frankish people. Previously Gaul had been a part of the Roman Empire. However, in the fifth century waves of Germanic invasions broke the Roman hold over this area. It was under Clovis, a strong king, that the Frankish Kingdom was firmly established. The death of Gregory, however, heightened the problem facing the Franks. Not only was there confusion concerning the ethical and religious systems, but the country was then divided among his four sons. This caused practically constant civil war until Pepin II gained ascendancy in 687 A.D.

During this time of confusion the spark of Christianity continued to flicker, not only from the established Roman source but from a new source as well. Christianity continued in spite of the fact that a majority of the Franks espoused paganism worshipping rocks and trees. Migrations of Celtic people from Southwest Britain into the area now known as Brittany once again brought the Gospel to France. The principal missionary effort in this movement was from Ireland and Britain. For a time the Church in Brittany and that of the rest of France were almost completely separate. However, in time they gradually became united as they both belonged within the framework of the established Roman Catholic Church.

The Church in France thus remained in a rather lukewarm state having few adherents and those primarily in name only. While this state prevailed in

the Church the political and economic systems were also in a state of chaos. This state continued until 768 when Pepin III died, leaving the kingdom to his two sons, Carloman and Charlemagne. While this potentially could have caused more disunity, Carloman died in 771, leaving Charlemagne the sole ruler.

Charlemagne was a skillful fighter as well as a shrewd administrator so that he was able to forge a strong kingdom from the relatively weak one that he inherited. By using the influence of papal Rome he was also able to forge an empire in Western Europe. In fact, he was crowned emperor in 800 by Pope Leo. This nominally "Christianized" most of Western Europe. Charlemagne introduced a new concept in the spread of Christianity—the use of force. While previous kings had accepted Christianity and urged their followers to do the same, never had one forced Christianity on a subject people. This was done with the blessing of the pope and certainly was a factor in decreasing paganism in this part of Europe.

From Charlemagne's time, Christianity seems to have been firmly established in France even though the Holy Roman Empire was to crack following his death. Christianity continued in France primarily as Roman Catholicism until the period of the Reformation. Since that time there have been small numbers of Protestants. Today it is estimated that about 82% of the population is Roman Catholic.

—Glen W. Shirk, M.D.
Stockton, California

COMMUNION NOTICES

The Fall Lovefeast of the Salida Old Brethren Church will be held, the Lord willing, on October 17th and 18th at the Salida meeting house, Salida, California. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

—Daniel F. Wolf

BIBLE WORD REVIEW

PERDITION — Eternal death; damnation. (Oxford) Entire loss; ruin; utter loss of the soul, or of final happiness in a future state. (Webster)

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." (II Thessalonians 2:3)

As we see by the definition, this word, perdition, refers to a future state. It is not a place, but will happen in hell or the lake of fire. According to our verse, there is a "son of perdition." He is also called the "man of sin" and he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." There is no repentance here. This is an enemy of God. Surely his damnation or perdition is just.

Our other verse says, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." How important it is, then, to believe and not to draw back knowing that this would be unto perdition. —L.&M.C.

CHILDLIKE FAITH

A little boy playing in the aisle of a transcontinental train attracted the attention of another traveler. "Where are you going, my little man?" he asked.

"Out west, sir," the boy replied.

"But to what place?" asked the interested stranger.

"I do not know, sir, but my father knows, and I am going with him."

Christians may not know what the future holds, but they do know who holds the future.

Selected from "The Christian

Example"

THE SHUTTLE

"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." -Job 7:6

Our time of living here below,
The shuttle's flashing come and go,
Weaving across life's warp our ways,
Forever going all our days.

Life's loom began at early morn
The fatal moment we were born;
Thread of our deeds across and on,
Time moves along and days are gone.

Swiftly the shuttle's flashing land
The colored thread from hand to hand,
Weaving a pattern—fabric grows,
Design and color brightly shows.

For on and on this tempo keeps,
In waking days and in our sleeps;
Our lives go on from sun to sun,
Repeating as each day is done.

Our lives perhaps like verses strung,
Night intervenes as days are hung,
And shows between each passing light
A lighter record of each night.

O may there be designs most fair,
Show application, loving care,
For soon the shuttle's course is run,
The loom is silent, fabric done.

—J. I. Cover

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and
clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you,
with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, for-
giving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath
forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31,32

There was a disciple of Jesus in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord came to him in a vision and told him to go to a certain street in the city and inquire in the house of Judas for a man called Saul of Tarsus. The Lord said that Saul had been praying and had seen in a vision a man named Ananias who would put his hand on him so he would receive his sight. Ananias was fearful because Saul had persecuted the Christians, but the Lord told him to go anyway because He had chosen Saul to preach Jesus to the Gentiles.

When Ananias entered the house of Judas he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto you, has sent me that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

As soon as Ananias had finished speaking, Saul had a wonderful thing happen to him. I suppose when he saw that dazzling light when he had met the Lord on his way to Damascus, it had burned his eyes so that they were seared. Now that Ananias was here, there were scales or scabs that fell from Saul's eyes and he could see again! Saul was not a man to do nothing about the wonderful miracle that had happened to him. The Bible says that Saul was baptized and stayed with the disciples for awhile and then he preached Christ in the synagogues, or Jewish churches. He told them that Jesus is the Son of God.

Here is an amazing thing: Saul who had done everything in his power to persecute the Christians, was now one himself and was doing all he could to convert others to believe in Jesus. He was a changed man because Jesus had spoken to him. Saul, who was later called Paul, always remained faithful to his Lord. He spent the rest of his life witnessing for Jesus and establishing churches throughout the Gentile world.

Questions:

- (1) What did Ananias do to Saul before he received his sight? (Acts 9:17)
- (2) What did Saul do after he was baptized? (Acts 9:19)

—Rudolph Cover

THE PILGRIM

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NOS. 10 & 11

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

PRAISE, MY SOUL, THE KING OF HEAVEN

Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven;
To His feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like me His praise should sing?
Praise Him! Praise the Everlasting King!

Praise Him for His grace and favor
To our fathers in distress;
Praise Him, still the same forever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise Him! Glorious in His faithfulness!

Father-like, He tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Praise Him! Widely as His mercy flows.

Angels help us to adore Him;
Ye behold Him face to face;
Sun and moon, bow down before Him,
Dwellers all in time and space.
Praise Him! Praise with us the God of grace!

By J. G. Bitthauer

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GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

In our consideration of God's wonderful majesty and power in the Creation, we may overlook some of the equally or more wonderful things revealed in his Word about himself.

There is more revealed of God in his Word than what can be known by beholding his handiwork with our eyes. In his Word he has revealed, at least in part, what he purposed in us before, and in, the creation of the world.

In the Psalms it is said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." But it is also said, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." This shows that God is communicating intelligently with us and intends to bring us into relationship with him.

In Romans 8: 28 it is said, "and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, To them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Thus God purposed eternally that there should be a family of "many brethren" who would be like his Son Jesus Christ. And not only did he purpose this high calling for those who love him, but verse 30 shows he provided all the means to accomplish it.

This same theme is elucidated and enlarged upon in the first chapter of Ephesians where it is said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame

before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will . . . " Here it is revealed that we were chosen and predestinated before the foundation of the world to be children of God through Jesus Christ. And this predestination includes the ultimate gathering together of all the children of God in Christ; in heaven and on earth, as said in verse 10.

Again in Titus 1: 2 it is said, "In hope of eternal life which God, which cannot lie, promised before the world was." Showing that God intended that his children should have eternal life. And this life is in his Son. Therefore Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish . . . "

Also in Ephesians 3: 3-15, the apostle Paul says that there was a mystery (or secret) of God that was hid from former ages, but now (in Paul's time) made known: that the Gentiles should be "fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promises in Christ by the gospel . . . And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord . . . For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth are named."

Here it is revealed that God purposed, before he made the world, that the Gentile should be included in the united body of his people called the Church, which would show to all worlds His "manifold wisdom" (in determining such a plan). But this was kept secret from men in other ages (before Christ), but was made known by the coming of Christ and the preach-

ing of the gospel, as said in II Timothy 1: 9,10, ". . . who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Finally: It is revealed in Matt. 25:34 that God's eternal purpose includes the possession of a heavenly and eternal Kingdom for his people: For when he comes again he will say to the righteous, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

In summery then, It is evident, by the Word of God, that God planned, before he made the world or man, to have a family composed of people of all nations to be like his Son Jesus Christ, united in one body called the Church, of which Christ is the head; ultimately to be gathered together in Him to inherit the kingdom of God.

How marvelously condescending of our God to make known to us what he intended for us before we were created or the world was made. . This should help us to a more complete knowledge of our obligation to him and a better understanding of the prophecies of things to come. For we know that what he has purposed and promised, that he will surely do.

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Daniel F. Wolf
Modesto, California

FROM GLORY TO GLORY

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Corinthians 3:18)

The divine and wonderful change that takes place in the Christian's heart can be likened to a growing plant. We behold in it the skill and wonderful workmanship of a seed planted in the soil, growing until the glory of the plant, the flower, becomes evident. The plant changes from the glory of the bud wherein the potentials of the developing flower show the highest attainment: the amazing process of reproductive glory finally brought to maturity.

So rings in our hearts the words of life: "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." (John 17:22) This glory of companionship, dwelling together in unity that our desires are to be one in Christ, to rejoice in the unifying power, and the fusing of these desires to be one with Him in glory may so unite us to attain to the transcendent glory that we can, by growing in grace, at last move from that glory on earth to the glory in Heaven.

The process of attaining to oneness of mind, and feeling that unity with each other, and so to be like our Lord, that this attainment may grow to the feeling of expression that we may say: "O the glory of the presence of God on earth, of Jesus Christ our Lord that by His glory He sheds a halo on every Christian pilgrim, that it lightens up the pathway of glory to glory!" "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world," (I John 4:7) Yes indeed, if conditions can be attained, all the atten-

dent blessings of our pilgrim journey will be rounded out in the joy of service. We will prize every word of God—our very spiritual living. We can be assured of God's divine care over us, and we can walk as He walked, until His glory of His earthly presence, hallowed by His living words and actions can descend on us as the gentle dews of heaven to the thirsty vegetation. Then the evidence of decay and death can be as we read, "Though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

From this glory on earth we anticipate the magic and wonderful transfer to the glory of Heaven. As the lowly grub lives in obscurity, so our lives can be "hid with Christ in God." The grub of the earth lives and grows for the birth of transcendent change; so we too can finally spread our wings of glory "as of a dove" and fly away to the rapturous glory, "even as by the Spirit of God."

From glow to glory—what a change!
The power of God so great and strange
Works wonders in the day of grace
To see our Saviour face to face.

O change divine! O work of love!
On earth below that change to prove
In humble labor day by day,
Hallow it all to watch and pray.

How happy is the Christian's lot
Upon the earth in little spot,
Where glory glows and faith is strong,
To live for Christ the whole day long.

And witness to His living word,
Our way, our life, our crowned King Lord.
His service be our living trust,
Who is so good and kind and just.

He gives us strength, and by His grace
We travel on the life-long race;

We walk by faith and not by sight,
And dare to stand up for the right.

From glory here, to glory there
He leads us on with loving care,
That when our sun sets in the west
With angels come to glory rest.

—J. I. Cover
Sonora, California

HOW STRONG ARE YOU?

"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." (Proverbs 24:10)

God has designed ways of showing to us our true condition before Him. Many times we feel that we are very strong and able to endure many temptations. Then we are inclined to be careless in our decision to avoid evil that we would be confronted with in this job or that activity.

Adversity or trouble of various kinds is designed by God to test our strength. He knows how strong we are. Yet many times we overestimate our strength and do not realize how very weak we are. Therefore, God designs these tests for us that we might be able to better understand ourselves and more carefully nurture the Christian life.

What is your reaction to a disappointment? How do you respond to a delay? Perhaps you are on a trip or you have planned something else, and something enters in which causes you to delay. It may be another person who has not kept his part of a bargain; he may have been careless and not kept his word to you; or you may have had an accident or a car failure; perhaps there is sickness which would cause a delay or the changing of your plans.

What is your response to such interference with your plans and wishes? If we cannot go through such adversity with thanksgiving to God for His mercies,

knowing that He is planning them for us that we might grow thereby, we have an alarm signal. It is an indication that we are sick spiritually. Our faith is very weak. We do not believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, as we ought to.

What is it that makes our faith strong? "So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17) "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." (I John 2:14) The Word of God is that which makes our faith strong. We cannot get by with a diet of one meal a week, or two meals a week which we might get in the church services.

We must learn to feed upon the Word as though our very life depended upon it. Indeed it does depend upon it. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63) "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (I Peter 2:2) From these and other passages we learn that the Word is our food; without it, we will die.

We eat the natural food three times a day. Sometimes there is a fourth meal, or a snack in between the three meals. Children who are healthy and growing, though they have had three good meals during the day, will at bedtime say, "I'm hungry, Mama, what can I eat?" There is a strong, healthy appetite in the healthy, growing body. In the same way, if our spiritual man is strong and healthy, there is a strong, healthy appetite for the spiritual food. A weak appetite for the spiritual food indicates a very weak condition that is cause for alarm. We need to begin to feed the spiritual man that he might become strong and have therefore a strong appetite. When children lose their appetite, immediately we know they are sick; so with the spiritual man: if the appetite grows wane, then we know there is a sick condition.

The first step toward feeding on the Word is a de-

cision that it is necessary. A second step is to decide that we want it above anything else. A third step is to decide a time when we shall feed on the Word regularly. A fourth step is to decide on some method of procedure in our study.

You will discover that in nothing has Satan ever resisted you so much as a regular time of studying the Scriptures. It is his greatest enemy in your life. Therefore he sets all his hosts in array against you and will go as far in opposing you as God will allow him to. Be prepared to determine to stick with it. Look to God to give you the victory over him that for no cause you will give way to his resistance.

You will find that this will be the greatest source of blessing you ever experienced in your life. The daily feeding on the Word makes you strong. It clarifies the issues; it sharpens your thinking; it removes the fog. Over a period of time you will become aware that the things which were problems to you are now clearing up and you have a very clear answer to them. Such study satisfies the soul, destroys the longings of the flesh, brings peace, and fills you with the joy of the Lord. You find that indeed "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." (Proverbs 10:22)

Do not be satisfied with reading the Word only. Dig into it; study the Word. Take verses apart word by word; observe how the word is used; observe what is said about this word in this passage. Take a good concordance and study this word throughout the Scripture. Compare the Scriptures and get a balanced view of the Scriptural teaching on this subject. Study the meaning of words.

Another approach is to study a character in the Scriptures by observing all that the whole Bible tells us about him or her. Try to place yourself into the experience of this individual. Observe how God worked and responded to his faithfulness or his unfaithfulness.

One very fruitful study that every young person

should engage in before marriage is a thorough study of the doctrines of the Word. It may take days or weeks, or perhaps even months in some cases, to cover a doctrine as you would like. Stay with it. Do not give up. Be courageous in your study. Get up early in the morning and spend an hour or so each day with this type of activity.

As you study, let the Word search you out. Apply it to your own life. Make everything personal to yourself. Do not think of others during this time of study. This is a time of study for your own admonition, encouragement, reproof, rebuke, comfort, and whatever you need to build the Christian life and to strengthen the inner man.

When you have followed this pattern for some months or years, you will find that you will be strong in adversity. You will not have to make yourself strong, or boost yourself up for some experience that will come along in life, but you will already be strong and fitted for the battle. Do not wait to begin such a preparation till the battle comes in all its fury. Fit and prepare yourself by the Word of God.

The responsibility is yours; no one else can do it for you. Bible schools, correspondence courses, and such like helps are no true substitutes for this personal Bible study.

God bless you as you proceed.

By Paul M. Landis in "The Christian Example"
Selected by Lois Martin

BIRTHS

COVER: a son, Jesse Reuben, born to Joseph and Carol Cover on October 4, 1970 at Sonora, California.

DRUDGE: a son, Roger Amos, born to John and Elizabeth Drudge on November 1, 1970 at Wroxeter, Ontario.

CONING: a son, Thaddaeus Michael, born to Melvin and Marilyn Coning on November 5, 1970 at Goshen, Indiana.

O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD

In the book of Colossians, chapter 3, verse 15 are these words: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." In the same epistle, chapter 2, verses 7 and 8 it says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." "Thankful" or "thankfulness" and "thanksgiving" are similar in meaning but not identical. Thankfulness is what we have in our hearts, and thanksgiving is our expression of it.

Comparing these words reminds me of an incident in my own experience. An older aunt of mine lives alone very near the road we travel every two weeks to church. We talked many times of stopping in but were always tired, in a hurry, or claimed some other excuse. One time I told her we thought of her often as we passed her house. She replied, "I never would have known it!" This is true. Unless our thoughts and feelings are expressed or demonstrated, no one knows about them. If we are thankful for a gift, the giver will not know it for sure until we tell them and show them our thankfulness.

We would not reason quite the same and say that if we do not thank God for our gifts He will not know that we are thankful because He knows our thoughts and the intents of our hearts. But God wants us to be thankful and also to express our thankfulness in thanksgiving. God says through David the psalm writer: "O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works." These are action verbs and are some of our duties to God. These actions will demonstrate thankfulness in the heart.

One writer recommends making a list to help in our thanksgiving. He says to first list our many blessings

and assets; then make a list of our grievances and troubles; then proceeding quickly to the next step, give thanks for all of them. This is important because we read in Ephesians 5:20 about "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This also reminds us of the promise of Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If we do not want to admit that even our troubles are good for us and occasions for thanksgiving, then perhaps we should question our love for God, for this is the qualification of the promise.

We could certainly make a long list of blessings to be thankful for today. We have national blessings of freedom and opportunity, material blessings more than any of our forefathers, blessings of health, children, friends and brethren, fellowship and happiness. But most outstanding on our list will be the blessings of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so..."

—L.C.

MY FATHER PROVIDES

My Heavenly Father provides for me:

A Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, who cares for me.

He provides my pasture. There is abundant food for the soul as well as the body. Each day there is a new supply for my new needs.

He provides my rest. He leads His sheep into the quiet, shaded, deep places with God, beside the still-moving river of His presence.

He provides for my restoration. No matter how spent and weary I become physically, and sometimes spiritually, He restores both body and soul.

He provides safety in the presence of my enemies. There are enemies of the spirit that are prepared to

overwhelm me and destroy all my effectiveness. But my Shepherd spreads His table of supply before me. I leave it refreshed, undaunted, prepared for whatever may come.

He provides in abundance. There is such infilling of the Spirit available that whenever I reach out my cup it overflows. There is more than enough for me and I can reach out to others and supply for them.

He provides my eternal home, places goodness and mercy along my pathway, and, when I reach the house of the Lord at last, I may dwell there forever.

My God, I love Thee; not because
I hope for heaven thereby,
Nor yet because who love Thee not
Are lost eternally.
Thou, O my Jesus, Thou didst me
Upon the Cross embrace;
For me didst bear the nails, and spear,
And manifold disgrace.
And griefs and torments numberless,
And sweat of agony;
Yea, death itself; and all for me
Who was Thine enemy.
Then why, O Blessed Jesus Christ,
Should I not love Thee well?
Not for the sake of winning heaven,
Nor of escaping hell;
Not from the hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward;
But as Thyself hast loved me,
O ever-loving Lord.
So would I love Thee, dearest Lord,
And in Thy praise will sing;
Solely because Thou art my God,
And my most loving King.

A seventeenth century hymn. Selected by Alma Garber

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Salida Congregation held an election for a deacon October 16. Brother Joseph Wagner was chosen and installed with his wife Letha. —Daniel F. Wolf

HISTORICAL

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

THE LOW COUNTRIES—BELGIUM AND HOLLAND

Unlike many of the countries which we have previously examined, the low countries were never fully integrated into the Roman Empire. While it is true that small portions of present day Belgium had been a part of the Roman Empire and consequently exposed to Christianity, most of the early missionary work had been completely undone by the barbarian invasion which destroyed the empire.

When the great missionary effort of the Anglo-Saxons of England began, it was to the low countries that the Gospel was first carried. They had been preceded by the Irish monks. The combined effort of these two evangelistic groups were able to bring about the conversion of the majority of the people in these countries by the end of the eighth century.

One of the early missionaries to this area included Amandus who had been a monk since he was a young man. He made his headquarters in Ghent. Under the authority given him by the Merovingian ruler, Dagobert I, he instituted a building program which succeeded in establishing many new churches. Not content with the gain he had made, he persuaded Dagobert that baptism should be made compulsory. When this was instituted popular revolts followed. Amandus eventually fell out with Dagobert and was banished. He then journeyed south to work among the Basques.

Eligius was another missionary who had a great effect on Belgium. He was trained as a goldsmith and consequently quite wealthy. This wealth was used to free slaves, build churches and aid the poor. In addition he was handsome and a tireless preacher. The combination made him very popular causing him to succeed in areas where Amandus had failed. He was consecrated Bishop of Noyon, a Belgium diocese, in 641.

Bishop Wilfrid was the first English missionary to Friesland. In 678 he journeyed through the land preaching the Gospel and baptizing those who believed. It is said that a great deal of his success can be attributed to an unusually large catch of fish and bountiful harvests. As Wilfrid was an ardent Catholic, the Church in Friesland became tied to Rome though there had been no previous political ties.

Another English missionary, Willibrord, went with eleven young men to Utrecht. There with the support of Pepin of Heristal and the pope he began to labor to bring the Gospel to the Frisians. He continued for forty years until he was eighty one. Not only was he aided by the authority of Pepin, but also by Pepin's son, Charles Martel. Although he lived to see the majority of the Frisians converted, there was still a group in the northeast lead by Radbod. Radbod's successor, Alogisl II, was a Christian. This allowed the conversion of the Frisians to be carried forward by Winfrith (or Boniface) who was later to be instrumental in the bringing of the Gospel to the Germanic peoples. Although he labored from 719-722 he too was unable to complete the conversion of the people. However, after laboring for years among the Germanic peoples, he returned to the Frisians where he labored for two years. His death came in 754 while at a riverside with a group of Christians. They were suddenly set upon by pagans. Many of the group resisted, but it is reported that Boniface urged them to stand fast and accept martyrdom. Later a band of his followers inflicted severe punishment on the pagans forcing the remainder of the group to accept Christianity.

The final conversion of the Frisians came during the reign of Charlemagne who conquered most of Europe spreading Christianity by force. Thus at the end of the eighth century the area was predominantly Christian—achieved by the zeal of the missionaries and imperialism of Charlemagne.

—Glen W. Shirk, M.D.

Stockton, California

Reference: A History of the Expansion of Christianity

CHILDREN'S PAGE

ESCAPE IN A BASKET Acts 9:23-25

After Saul was converted he preached that Jesus, whom the Jews had killed, was alive. Because of this the Jews of Damascus wanted to kill Saul, and made plans how they would capture him. It would have taken a long time to search every house in the city for Saul, so they decided to have men watch by the gates of the city, and when Saul went out they would take him. The city of Damascus was an old, old city with high walls all around it. The only way to go in or out of the city was through the gates. Here was where the men waited, watching everyone who passed out of Damascus.

But God had a work for Saul to do, and somehow Saul was informed of the plan to arrest him. Now that Saul was a Christian, he had Christian friends. The disciples of Jesus began to make plans, too, only they made plans for Saul to escape out of the city. And what do you think they did? One night when it was dark they took Saul up on top of the great, high wall of the city. One of the disciples carried a big basket and a rope; then they tied the rope to the basket. Saul got into the basket and they let him down the outside of the wall till he reached the ground, safe outside the walls of the city. Saul was next heard of in Jerusalem; so he escaped out of his enemies' hands.

I wonder how long those Jews waited and watched by the city gates before they heard that Saul was no longer in Damascus.

QUESTIONS:

- (1) What happened to Saul in Jerusalem? (Acts 9:26)
- (2) What did Barnabas do for Saul? (Acts 9:27)

—Rudolph Cover

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

WE WAIT A STAR

The heavens waited, bare and awed,
To be set aglow by God;
A hush, a single prick of light,
Another, till from sheer delight
The morning stars together sang
And heaven's farthest reaches rang,
Hearing the firmament proclaim
The wonder of His matchless name.
Dim, distant morn, when stars were born!

Three men met on a long-past day;
Three kings were they from far away;
And they had followed far, so far,
The guidance of a brilliant star;
It led them over hill and glade,
Through mountain pass, in sun and shade,
To where the Lord Christ Jesus lay;
Glory came down to earth that day;
O wondrous morn when Christ was born!

Again, O bright and morning Star,
We wait Thy coming from afar;
Our hearts have waited long. Thy bride
Yearns to be at her Bridegroom's side;
Throughout the long dark nights we pray,
"Come, blessed Lord, do not delay!"
Our eyes are weary and grown dim
From searching distant skies for Him...
We wait a Star, we wait a Star!

By Martha Snell Nicholson

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ROOM FOR THE SAVIOR

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7)

Joseph and Mary had to use the lowly stable for the birth of the Baby who was to be Savior of the world. There was no room for Him in the regular accommodations for travellers. So it is now. There is room in the lowly hearts, but much of the world today has no room nor time for the Son of God.

In so many areas Jesus is crowded out. There is no room for Him in the pleasures of the world because these mean indulgence and self-gratification. Jesus calls for self-denial: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

There is no room for Jesus in much of the business world because from a businessman's standpoint, much of Jesus' way is impractical. In I Corinthians 10:24 Paul writes, "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Jesus says, "For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul." (Mark 8:36)

The world of sports has a different goal of honor and excelling over others, so hasn't a place for Jesus. Jesus' way is "...in honour preferring one another." (Romans 12:10)

The world of entertainment is dedicated to pleasing men and has no room for Jesus' way which recommends pleasing God. Paul says in Galatians 1:10, "...do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

Much of the professed church is not letting Jesus

have His place. Mary is honored above Him by many. By others His miracles are discredited even including the miracle of His birth.

He is excluded even at this time of year when men are supposedly celebrating His coming into the world. The event of His birth is forgotten among the costly gifts, the stories, the tinsel and idolatry that make up the "Christmas" of the world.

But there is one place where Jesus must have room. That is in the hearts of His people. He has made an offer that is good for all time, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20) This means to make room in your heart and your life for the Lord.

When Jesus has His place in the heart, then the Christian can have Godly pleasures, a legitimate business, Christian joy and fellowship, and he can remember the birth of Christ with gratitude to God for His wonderful works. When Jesus reigns in the heart, His presence purifies, and the scripture (Titus 1:15) applies where it says, "Unto the pure all things are pure..." But when Christ is not in a man, the last part of the same verse applies to him, "...but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

How important it is to give Jesus room in our hearts! He came as a lowly Baby born in a stable of a poor family from a conquered nation. But now He reigns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Never again will men crucify Him, but every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Then will be the time when we will want the Lord to have room for us. He is preparing for us—not a stable—but a place where there are many mansions. And there is room there for all who will make room for Him now. —L.C.

ROOM FOR THEE

Thou didst leave Thy throne, and Thy kingly crown,
When Thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room
For Thy holy nativity.

Heaven's arches rang, when the angels sang,
Of Thy birth, and Thy royal decree;
But in lowly birth didst Thou come to earth,
And in greatest humility.

Foxes found their rest, and the birds had their nests
In the shade of the forest tree;
But Thy couch was the sod, O Thou Son of God,
In the deserts of Galilee.

Thou camest, O Lord, with the living Word
That should set Thy people free;
But with mocking and scorn, and with crown of thorn
Did they take Thee to Calvary.

When the heavens shall ring and its choirs shall sing,
At Thy coming to victory,
Thou wilt call me home, saying "Yet there is room,"
There is room at my side for Thee.

Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus!
There is room in my heart for Thee.
Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus, come!
There is room in my heart for Thee. Amen.

—Emily E. S. Elliott, (1836-1897)

BAPTISMS

We rejoice much that the following precious souls
have confessed their faith in Jesus Christ and ac-
cepted baptism: Sister Linda Martin, October 31

Brother Timothy Royer, November 14

—Elmer Brovant

THE GOSPEL

The Gospel is the proclamation of God's eternal purpose in creating the world and man and the call to man to voluntarily accept and respond to that revealed purpose.

It reveals what God has already done, what He is doing now, and what He will do in the future to accomplish what He has purposed. We had no counsel in this great purpose and plan, but inasmuch as we are subjects and beneficiaries of it, it was necessary that it should be made known to us so that we might make it our willing and intelligent choice.

The dictionary says that the word "gospel" literally means "good news" or "glad tidings." But, especially, it means "the good news concerning Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Other definitions are: "The teachings of Christ and the apostles as a body or system," and, "The history of the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ, as contained in the four canonical books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."

The word "Gospel" occurs more than eighty times in the New Testament preceded by the article, "the"—"The Gospel"—as if in the sense in which it is used, there is only one Gospel. It is, therefore, The Good News or Glad Tidings of a very singular event in history which God promised in the Old Testament Scriptures and began its fulfillment in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world as a Bethlehem Babe.

We commonly think of the "Gospel" only in the New Testament, but it abounds also in the Old Testament in the many Messianic promises of a coming Redeemer and Saviour. The first of these promises was announced in Eden at the time of the fall when it was said that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpents head. It did not say in what manner this would be done, but was a promise that there would be a Redeemer and in spite of the fall there would be a redemption, and God's purpose in the creation would be victorious.

Thus in the Old Testament the Gospel is the an-

nouncement that the Redeemer would come, and in the New Testament it is the Glad Tidings that the Redeemer has come and redemption has begun.

Someone has said, "In the Old Testament the New is concealed, and in the New Testament the Old is revealed." A certain writer has said, "The Redemption accomplished through Calvary and the Resurrection began the fulfillment of the promise given centuries before. Before the New Testament was written, the apostles could preach the Gospel—what had been promised and what had been performed. The New Testament simply put into a written form the Good News that the Old Testament promise was being performed in Christ."

The Apostle Paul says, "And the scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, Saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Galatians 3:8) Christ is the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16), and the blessing that was and is to come upon all nations through Jesus Christ is the very heart and essence of the Gospel. And so, in the opening of Jesus' sermon on the mount, He first of all pronounced blessings upon His disciples who humbly believed and followed Him.

In the first chapter of St. Mark we read: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy

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way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Mark 1:1-4) Also in verses 14,15: "Now after that John was put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

When Jesus went into the synagogue at Capernaum (Luke 4:16) and was given the book of the prophecy of Isaiah, he read from what we know as the sixty first chapter: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord...and he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:16-21) This was as joyful a message of Glad Tidings concerning Himself as any in the holy Book. It seems significant that in Luke 4:18 the word "gospel" is used where in Isaiah 61:1 it says "good tidings." In a similar quotation in Romans 10:15, the word "gospel" is used where in Isaiah 52:7 it says "good tidings."

Some other joyful expressions of these Glad Tidings of the contemplation of the coming Saviour in the Old Testament, and the realization of its fulfillment in the New Testament are as follows:

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; With the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall

bring again Zion. Break forth into joy; sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." (Isaiah 7-10)

"Therefore shall the redeemed of the Lord return and come with singing unto Zion: and everlasting joy shall be on their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy: and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." (Isaiah 51:11) "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord shall wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."

(Isaiah 25:8) "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of and ass." (Zechariah 9:9)

"And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (Luke 1:46,47) "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10,11)

"Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:29-32) "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31) "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." (Acts 13:32,33)

In concluding this article, we are yet reminded that

one of our definitions for "Gospel" was "the teaching of Christ and the apostles as a body or system." There is much current evangelism which emphasizes only what Jesus did, but Jesus Himself made what He said as important as what He did. He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." And, "The words that I speak; they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63) "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:24-27) "Jesus answered and said, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings, and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me... Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:23-27) "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:25,26) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:27,28) "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

—D. F. Wolf

Modesto, California

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

"But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Corinthians 3:18)

The mighty, moving power that in the beginning moved upon the face of the waters, having His share in the work of creation; moving, acting, being in perfect harmony, one of the triune Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we desire to write of in reverence and praise.

The Holy Spirit bears witness on earth and record in Heaven. (I John 5:6-8) He may have charge of all the "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," (Hebrews 1:14) and also the great Recorder in Heaven.

The Comforter has come, for Jesus says, "I will send Him unto you." So in a mighty demonstration of His power He came "when the day of Pentecost was fully come" and baptized them with the Holy Ghost. Now the Apostles and brethren being "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49), with cloven tongues of fire upon their heads, witnessed to that notable event and began to tell of the wonderful works of God, and glorified His holy name.

Now the interchange between Heaven and earth is complete. As the Spirit of the Lord rules in the hearts of true believers in a general way, even so He leads and guides individually. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." (John 16:13)

His mission on earth is worldwide. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." (John 16:8-11)

What a wonderful Guide! What a glorious Leader with such reproofing power! "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." (Matthew 3:16,17, 4:1) Jesus had an unlimited measure and gift of the Holy Spirit, for John the Baptist says, "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3:34) So we understand, while Jesus was on earth, the Spirit of God was with Him until His mission on earth was done!

This Holy Spirit, this holy Power and Personage who helped create the world, who strove with man before the flood, (Genesis 6:3) led the holy prophets to speak "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." David pled with God when he had sinned, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Psalms 51:10)

Thus the work and keeping in touch with mankind has the Holy Spirit witnessed through the ages. But more endearing, more thrilling, more ever-reminding us that the Holy Spirit, being with Jesus all along His earthly life fully knows the work of salvation and the process and progress of each Christian's life. His full and partnership understanding with Jesus, and His knowing all this so well, Jesus gave Him the commission to take His place as Comforter when Jesus ascended from earth to Heaven. And now He collectively and individually takes care of the children of God to help bring about the great change from glory to glory, from earthy to heavenly, from mortal to immortality, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thou Spirit, mighty Power,
Be with us every hour,
Along the way,

To lead and guide us on
Until the night is gone
Unto the glorious dawn
Of perfect day.

So pure and right and good,
Show us of Heavenly food,
To live in peace.
Guide us, we need Thy aid,
In sun and pleasant shade,
Till Adam's debt is paid,
Earth life to close.

Speak to us of the Lord;
Show us His Holy Word
To understand.
Be near us in faith's fight;
Be Thou our shining Light;
Till day in place of night
In happy land.

When we by angels borne,
Waiting the rising morn,
Earth's trials done.
We see the shining host,
Those we loved best and most,
Father, Son, Holy Ghost,
Thou Three in One.

—J. I. Cover
Sonora, California

This is the final article in a series of six on
II Corinthians 3:18.

BIRTH

BAKER: a son, David Jesse, born to Paul and Mary Baker
of Maple, Ontario on December 8.

THE ANGELS' MESSAGE: PEACE ON EARTH

"Peace on earth"—how strange the message!
Listen to the sound of war,
To the noise of strife and conflict,
To the struggle evermore.

Do you wonder, weeping Christian?
Why the message seems in vain;
Why the gladsome Christmas chorus
Leaves on earth so much of pain?

"Peace on earth"—O doubting spirit,
Let your sad forebodings cease.
Jesus is the Overcomer,
Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

Though we see not all things conquered,
Yet our faith crowns Jesus now,
And His reign shall ne'er be over
Till each enemy shall bow.

Then the tide of Christmas blessing
Shall prevail the world around,
And the glory of Christ's kingdom
Shall forevermore be found.

"Peace on earth"—how sweet the message
To the saddened, sorrowing earth!
Strife and tumult soon must vanish,
Joy and victory have their birth.

Sweeter and sweeter grows the chorus!
Listen, then, O weary soul,
Till it penetrates the darkness,
Fills with light, and makes thee whole.

To each heart that takes the message
Even now its strife is o'er,
And it hears the angels' music
Swelling clearer evermore.

Selected from the "Bible Monitor"

MY SOUL DOTH MAGNIFY THE LORD (Luke 1:46).

It was a moment of deepest joy for Mary of Nazareth. She had looked forward to this moment when she could discuss with her cousin, Elizabeth, the things that had come to pass.

Still fresh in her mind was the visit of the angel Gabriel with his startling news. He had addressed her with the words: "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

Now after her long and dusty trek from Galilee, Elizabeth greeted her with these words again, "Blessed art thou among women... and whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

Mary's heart at once responded. There was joy and awe and wonderment and a deep humility in her voice as she poured out her prayer and song of praise. She began solemnly, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

More than a thousand years earlier, Hannah, the mother of Samuel, had used almost the same words in a glad prayer to God. It too was a song of motherhood. Yet Mary's Son would be a greater than Samuel. Mary was to be the mother of the Son of God!

Mary had many reasons to magnify the Lord, Why had she, above all the women of the earth, been chosen for this special honor? An unknown girl from the hills of Galilee, she would have been lost in a king's palace. Yet she was to give birth to the greatest King of all and suckle Him and be His mother, the nearest and dearest of humankind to Him.

Mary had not been chosen because of her riches, for when the time came for her child to be born, it would be in a stable, on a rough bed of hay and straw.

Yet the very fact that she had been chosen might have caused a less humble person to fall. Mary might well have forgotten her background, and dwelt on her fortune, magnifying herself in place of the Lord! But Mary didn't. God knew that this young virgin was

qualified to be a mother to His only begotten Son. And not the least of the qualifications was her meekness and humility.

But the years ahead would not be easy for Mary. Her role as "mother of the Lord" would mean many tears and fears—the flight to Egypt from the wrath of an earthly king, the anxiety for the boy Jesus in the temple, the bitter death and separation at Calvary. In each state Mary would need to be resigned, willing to "magnify the Lord."

Not until the climax of His triumphal resurrection would Mary's spirits soar once more to the heights they reached in Elizabeth's house that day.

Then, and through the intervening years, Mary's song would ever be a song of praise, "My soul doth magnify the Lord."

Mary's role was unique in one sense. Yet in other ways her life was no different from ours. Indeed, how very similar! We who are Christ's are also called, ("called to be saints" I Corinthians 1:2) and chosen ("chosen...to salvation" II Thessalonians 2:13). Our earthly assignment will be different from Mary's; but our submission to God, our hopes and desires, and our humility must be the same as hers.

When we consider what God has done for us, we too have a wealth of reasons to "magnify the Lord." But only as we humble ourselves is it possible to magnify Him.

Ready at Thy bidding, Lord,
Anything to do,
Be it but a menial task,
I will still be true;
Or some great and noble work,
Thou canst help the same;
My fervent prayer is that my life
May magnify Thy name.

—Joseph Stoll

Selected from "The Church Correspondent"

CHILDREN'S PAGE

CHRIST IS BORN!

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel of the Lord said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Here is the greatest news that man had been given since he disobeyed God in the garden of Eden. And it was told to just a few shepherds, men who were poor in material wealth but rich in faithfulness to God. They were men of God who were given the honor of hearing angels announce the birth of Jesus. How would you like to hear an angel talk to you? How would you like to hear a whole chorus of angels sing? I think that would be the most harmonious music that man has ever heard.

"And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, that the Lord has made known unto us."

This was something that kings would have liked to see. But no, they were too unholy; they could not be trusted to know and see the precious baby Jesus. Shepherds, men of God, who knew how to do simple things—who could lead helpless sheep into green pastures and beside still waters—these were the ones God selected to tell of the birth of Jesus. When the shepherds had seen the newborn babe they returned and told all they met what a glorious thing had happened to them. They could not keep still; could you?

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen..."

Wouldn't it be wonderful at this season if everyone could feel like those humble shepherds on that glad day.

—Rudolph Cover